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NEW TIMES

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A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

GORBACHEV:
WE HOLD OUT
A HAND
TO THE WEST,
NOT A FIST

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1986-INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

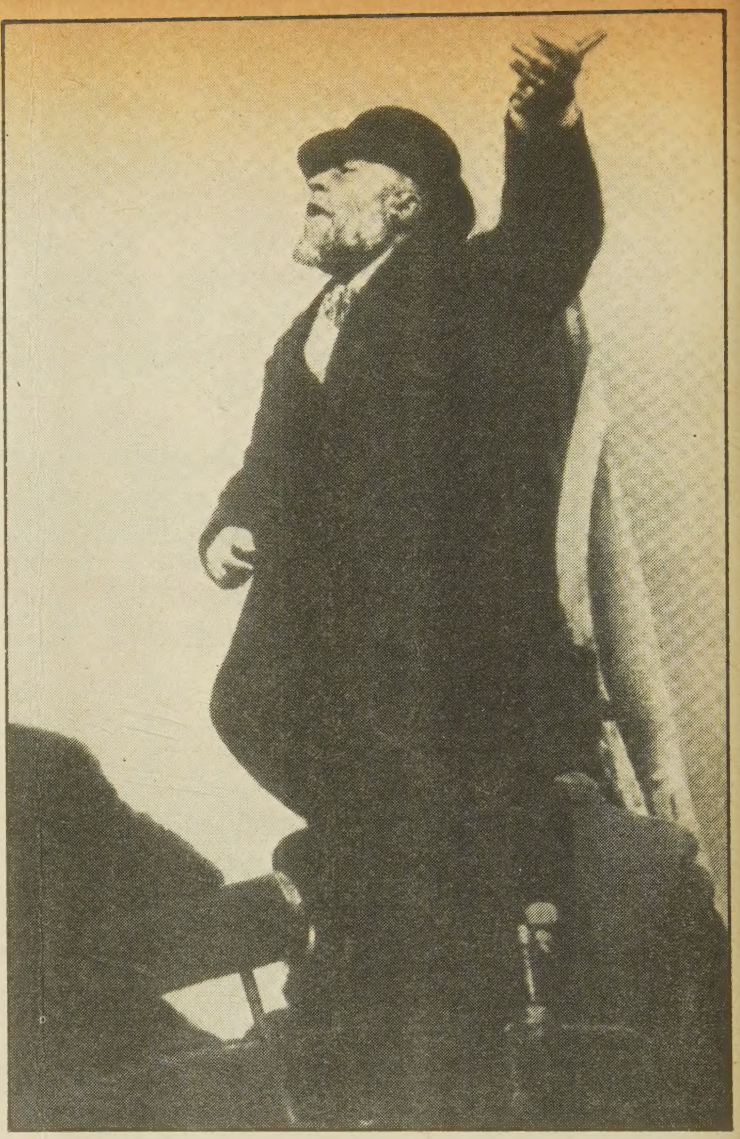
At the close of last century and the beginning of this the peoples were plagued by wars. In Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas imperialist powers and lesser capitalist predators were completing the repartition of the world; bloodshed was the order of the day. It was at this time that terms like "gunboat diplomacy" and "big stick policy" entered the political lexicon, and "national interests" were invoked to cover up expansionism and whip up chauvinism and jingoism.

But just as any physical action invites a counteraction, so did militaristic ambition meet with growing resistance. As the end of the 19th century approached, meetings of the opponents of war became increasingly frequent, and pacifist organizations came into being which, notwithstanding their limitations and at times the fallacy of their basic premises, played an important part in the spread of anti-war sentiment.

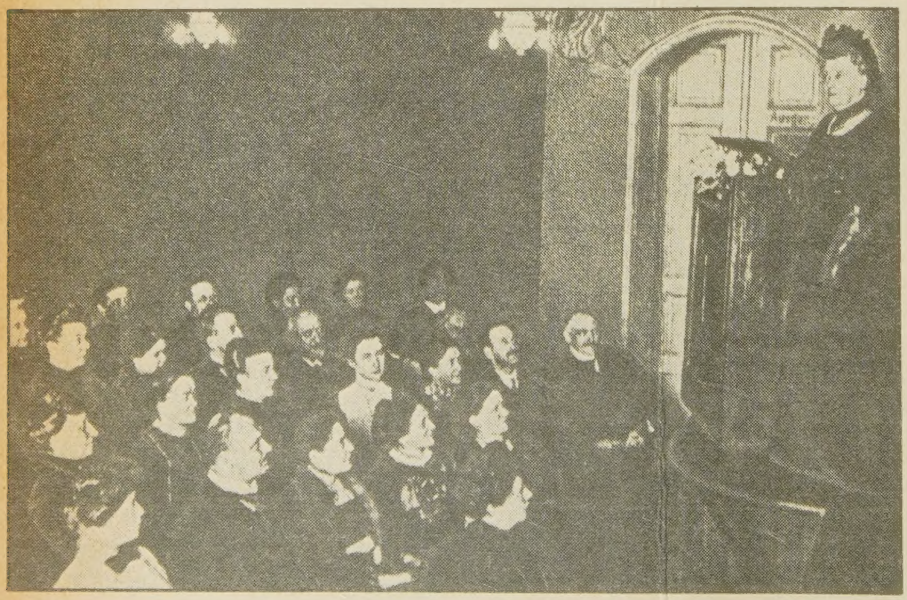
In 1891 the Austrian Society of Friends of Peace was founded in Vienna and at just about the same time the international Peace Bureau was set up in Berne. The moving spirit of both these organizations was Bertha von Suttner (1843-1914), author of the novel "Lay Down Your Arms!" (1889) which was translated into practically all the European languages. She was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1905 (there is reason to believe that it was she who persuaded Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, to will his fortune to be used for awards to individuals who distinguished themselves in the fields of science, literature and defence of peace). And although Suttner shared all the weaknesses of typical pacifists—chiefly inability to perceive the real causes of imperialist wars and faith in naive appeals to the "common sense" of the ruling class —her name is honoured by today's fighters for peace of different ideological orientation, the Communists included.

As time went on, along with pacifism, anti-war sentiment based on Marxist theory gained ground. A fearless fighter for peace was Jean Jaurés (1859-1914), an outstanding figure in the French and international working-class movement, member of parliament and journalist, and the founder of L'Humanité. One of the greatest orators of his time, he passionately exposed the warmongers. "The International has shown the proletarians," he said, "that they have no right to remain passive observers of the intrigues of the despots and capitalists against peace, that they are duty bound to act resolutely... to stamp out the seats of destructive wars before they flare up."

But it was too late to stop the avalanche of approaching war. The conflict that broke out in 1914 developed into a world war. It is symbolic that its first victim was Jaurés. On July 31 he was assassinated by a chauvinist, and the official announcement of his death was posted all over France side by side with the decree on general mobilization. A time of bitter ordeal set in for internationalists and fighters for peace.



Pré-Saint-Gervais, France, 1913. Jean Jaurés addressing an anti-war meeting of 150,000 sponsored jointly by the Socialists and the General Confederation of Labour.



Berlin, 1913. Bertha von Suttner speaking at a conference of peace champions.

Continuation of our brief review of the history of the anti-war struggle (see issue No. 14).

SOLIDARITY IN STRUGGLE

Every festive occasion is unique in its own way. The anniversary of the October Revolution conjures up visions of red banners in the streets of Petrograd. Victory Day brings to mind bemedalled ranks of grey-haired veterans who upheld our cause in the grim years of the war. And thinking of May Day we visualize the firm handclasp that unites the working people of our planet.

This handclasp symbolizes the solidarity of the proletariat ordained by history to stand in the forefront of the battle for a radiant future for all humanity. Proletarian solidarity was sealed forever in the blood shed by workers 100 years ago, in May 1886, in one of the first collisions between labour and capital. The blood that crimsoned the pavements of Chicago then has been immortalized in the red banners of May Day.

At the beginning of the century Eugene Debs, whom Lenin called the "American Bebel," recalling the difficult path traversed by the revolutionary workers' movement, wrote that it "has been seized by the throat and choked and clubbed into insensibility, enjoined by courts, assaulted by thugs, charged by the militia, shot down by regulars, traduced by the press, frowned upon by public opinion, deceived by politicians, threatened by priests, repudiated by renegades." But nothing could and nothing can halt the revolutionary onmarch of the working-class movement strong by virtue of its international solidarity.

The ideal of solidarity embodied in May Day celebrations acquired powerful material force from the outset. In our time working-class solidarity is the solid foundation on which the socialist community, world socialism, rests. The vital force of solidarity inspires growing moral, political and material support to the victims of contemporary imperialism. The worldwide solidarity of the working class cements the international communist movement.

Emblazoned on May Day banners, alongside calls to solidarity, is the meaningful word "Labour." As we observe the day at the time of vernal awakening, we know very well that, unlike the summer season in Nature, the social sphere does not yield fruit of itself. By initiating a decisive turn in all the multiform aspects of the life of the Soviet Union and by charting the trajectory for accelerated entry into ever new orbits of social and economic development, the 27th Congress of the CPSU became the source of new strength for our movement, enriched us with a strategy of rapid advance.

But hopes do not melt steel, they do not grow grain or build houses. Our formula of success is hope multiplied by precise economic and social analysis and the creative enthusiasm of the masses. This formula does not lend itself to computation by the rules of arithmetic. What is needed is the higher mathematics of bold political, economic and social solutions. A heightened sense of the new. Uncompromising rejection of all that impedes our advance—bureaucracy and window-dressing, eyewash and indolence of thought and action, hypocrisy and social injustice. In a word, what is needed is a creative approach to Lenin's legacy.

As they observe May Day, the Communists issue a call to strengthen peace. They urge the curbing of those who are ready to plunge the globe into a universal catastrophe for the sake of obviously futile social revenge. There is no task nobler than that of putting an end once and for all to an order in which human progress resembles, as Marx said, "that hideous, pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain." To the solution of the task of doing away with wars the Soviet people and the peoples of the other socialist countries dedicate their political potential and spare neither intellectual nor material efforts to create a defence capability that will tie the hands of the forces of war.

To raise Soviet society to a new and higher level and thereby hasten the triumph of communism in our country—this is how the Party has formulated the supreme goal of the Soviet people. This is also our internationalist duty dictated by proletarian solidarity. For every accomplishment of the world's first worker-peasant state in the sphere of social and economic progress, in the development of socialist self-government by the people, reinforces faith in the ideals of scientific communism and increases its power of attraction throughout the world.

■

On page 18 we publish reports from our correspondents of the struggle waged by the working people of the capitalist countries for their social and economic rights.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

● The article "From the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to Socialist Self-Government" by Anatoly Butenko (No. 8, 1986) is extremely timely, in my opinion. I am convinced that the road to the communist society lies exclusively through the realization in practice of socialist self-government by the whole people. This should be stressed most emphatically in order to quiet the voices of those who maintain that the Great October Socialist Revolution has ceased to be the motive force. Full realization of the potential of socialism, which is the object of the plans of your people and of the leadership of your country, will contribute to the success of the struggle waged by the working people here in Italy and other countries as well.

Roberto CAVICCHIOLI
Rome, Italy

● I was greatly surprised by the letter from Olof Gustafsson of Sweden on the Afghan question (Taking Up a Point, No. 5, 1986). He can hardly deny that U.S. armed forces are based in many countries thousands of miles distant from America. Or that the United States sends its troops to other countries in order to impose its will on them, strengthen its shaken domination and suppress the discontent of the population. Mr Gustafsson evidently considers this perfectly normal. But when it comes to the support and assistance rendered by socialist countries to those fighting for their national independence and liberation, people like him wax indignant. It seems to me that one need not be a great analyst to see who is really interested in preserving peace on our planet. One has only to overcome the prejudice inculcated by imperialist propaganda.

Charlotte LOOSE
Berlin, G.D.R.

● In your issue No. 1 for this year I read a letter from the Canadian girl Evelyn Lau. I was deeply impressed by the sincerity of her call for peace. I am 19 and I would like to convey my greetings to her through your journal and to assure her that all Soviet people yearn for peace and strive to avert the threat of war.

Konstantin SVETLICHNY
Kharkov, U.S.S.R.

● Why have you gone over to printing the number of the issue in the upper left-hand corner of the cover? This is most inconvenient. Besides, the number is given in such small type that it is difficult to read. Another thing —there is no need to give a brief enumeration of the contents on the cover. This is the opinion of a large group of lecturers from Archangel on whose behalf I write.

L. NOVITSKAYA
Archangel, U.S.S.R.

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A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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In May 1886 American reactionaries came down with an iron fist on striking Chicago workers in an attempt to make them forget the words "strike," "struggle," and "proletarian solidarity" for all time. The action had the opposite effect: for more than a century now these words have been inspiring courage in the working people across the world. Red May Day lives on in times of defeat and in times of victory.

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EUROPE'S HISTORIC CHANCE

VADIM NEKRASOV

The nuclear explosions on the Nevada test site, the bombings and missile shellings of Libyan cities—these and other acts by the U.S. Administration have raised not a few anxious questions in different parts of the world. Do these developments mean, people ask in various countries, that the United States is departing from the spirit of Geneva, which had so positive an effect on international relations, or are they merely a reflection of the continuing struggle in the White House to define the principles of foreign policy the country is to follow in years to come?

Addressing the 11th SUPG Congress in Berlin, Mikhail Gorbachev set out new Soviet peace proposals that have evoked wide comment in Europe and the world generally.

TASS photos

Eyes Turned on Moscow

The United States' West European allies are also gravely concerned about the situation that has arisen. Indignation at Washington's acts of adventurism is accompanied in Western Europe by greatly increased anxiety about the general trend of current international politics. Mirroring the opinion prevalent in Western Europe, the British newspaper Guardian writes that, judging from recent developments, the arms reduction issue now in the focus of international attention "has been shoved on to the back burner" by Washington and the Geneva thaw is fading to a nostalgic memory.

The nations of Europe—more vulnerable in an armed conflict than any other continent—are anything but enthusiastic about these developments.

They are looking to the Soviet Union —not only because Moscow was the United States' partner in Geneva in initiating the process which, Europeans hope, can still be carried forward for the benefit of all, but also because the ideas, conclusions and initiatives of the recent 27th CPSU Congress offer, in the opinion of many Europeans, the key to certain pressing international problems.

Addressing the 11th SUPG Congress in Berlin on April 18, Mikhail Gorbachev drew a clear picture of the situation obtaining today, put forward constructive new proposals on the part of the U.S.S.R. aimed at delivering mankind from the threat of a thermonuclear conflagration, at curbing the arms race, and outlined the contribution Europe can make towards a lasting European and world peace. "At this crucial moment," Mikhail Gorbachev stressed, "no one can shirk his duty to the present and future generations. It cannot be left to the American militarists to decide the fate of the world. As for the Soviet Union and the other socialist community countries, they have always acted and will continue to act with full awareness of their responsibility."

Although recent developments have clearly manifested a militaristic trend in the U.S. Administration's foreign policy line, the Soviet Union has reaffirmed that all its proposals for the elimination of nuclear weapons and curbing the arms race, put forward in Mikhail Gorbachev's January 15 statement, remain in force. In all circumstances it is necessary to continue to act with consistency and perseverance, and take every short- and long-term measure to stop the world sliding to a nuclear holocaust.

The Soviet Union calls on all nations and states—including, of course, Western Europe—to waste no time. This is a critical period. It confronts us with the imperative of expediting political agreements and implementing them as early as possible. The record of the past few weeks shows, however, that prejudiced and biassed thinking is preventing Western ruling circles from taking a sober look at the situation. This is especially true of Washington. Contrary to the interests and aspirations of all peoples, the Americans included, the White House has not only taken the course of actually undermining the understandings reached in Geneva, but also resorted to acts which further complicate the tense international situation.

And what about Western Europe, which now bears special responsibility for the triumph of reason and good will in international affairs? Placing special emphasis on Europe in its foreign policy, our country points out that the future of the continent lies in peaceful cooperation between all its states. It is not by chance that many of the proposals in the January 15 statement by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee are addressed directly to Europe.

Lack of Political Will

The Soviet Union is of the opinion that today's Western Europe retains a great potential for positive action but is lacking in political will. The West European NATO member states adhere, as a rule, to the hopelessly obsolescent and increasingly dangerous notions drawn from the doctrines of "containment" or "deterrence." Their ruling circles and mass media continue to prate about the "Soviet threat." The inertia of thinking in terms of armed confrontation is still pronounced in West European politicians' attitudes and approach. On the other hand,

broad sections of the West European public are growing immune to scaremongering official propaganda and see no military threat in the policy of the U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries. Incidentally, current developments go a long way towards enlightening the public as to who really wants peace, and who is pushing the world to the brink of nuclear war.

Needed: Action

In the corridors of power of West European capitals, nevertheless, talk of concern over the fate of the world remains only talk. Mikhail Gorbachev cited further examples of this in his Berlin speech. He reminded the audience that the Soviet Union had made a major concession by proposing to withdraw Soviet and American intermediate-range missiles from the entire continent on condition that Britain and France did not build up their own missile potentials. However, the very governments which, until recently, regarded the Soviet missiles as the chief threat to Western Europe, have now actually joined hands with the transatlantic hawks in an effort to prevent an agreement, to block—for the time being at least—this move of vital importance to European security.

Consider the stand taken by the present government of the F.R.G., the state on whose territory Western Europe's biggest nuclear weapon stockpiles are concentrated, and the East-targeted Pershing and cruise missiles deployed. How does this square with Bonn's protestations of its desire for peace and its readiness to promote cooperation with socialist countries? What good are the assurances that no war will ever be started from the F.R.G.'s territory if the ruling circles of that country still insist that "the German question" remains open, and have not repudiated their revanchist claims?

The Soviet Union does not tire of repeating that the present situation calls for a revised attitude, new bold approaches and a keen sense of responsibility for the fate of the peoples. Guided by these principles, our country continues to build upon, and improve, its comprehensive programme for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction by the end of the century. Whereas the January 15 statement suggested, in general terms, that conventional weapons and armed forces should also be subjected to coordinated reduction, in the Berlin speech Mikhail Gorbachev elaborated upon and further substantiated this idea.

Specifically, the U.S.S.R. has proposed an agreement on a considerable reduction of all components of the European states' ground troops and tactical aviation (and of the appropriate U.S. and Canadian forces) deployed over the whole of Europe, from the Atlantic coast to the Urals, with the units in question to be broken up and their weapons either destroyed or stored on national territories. The proposal provides for the simultaneous reduction of tactical nuclear weapons, and for reliable control at all stages of arms reduction using both national technical and international verification facilities, on-site inspection included if necessary.

Seeking to expedite the signing of a multilateral international convention which would deliver mankind from chemical weapons, the Soviet Union has submitted to the Geneva Disarmament Conference a number of new proposals aimed at removing the differences that still persist.

It is noteworthy that the new Soviet proposals specify neither deadlines for troop and conventional arms reduction, nor the quantitative and qualitative aspects thereof. No rigid pattern of control is set. All this, in the Soviet Union's opinion, is a matter for serious negotiation. The important thing now is to agree on the points of departure for such negotiations the need for which is undoubtedly growing.

A New Component

In today's Europe, two three-million-strong armies equipped with the latest tanks, planes and missiles—not to mention small arms of all kinds—confront each other. Both sides admit that such a confrontation is fraught with the danger of unpredictable incidents, misjudgements of the opponents' actions and intentions. Now that war can erupt and spread very quickly, this situation is a source of additional uncertainty and anxiety, not to mention mutual mistrust. The elimination of this factor which, in itself, generates tension in the relations between the two sides, will go a long way towards normalizing the situation on the continent. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that scientific and technological progress in the military sphere has reached a point where it can produce new weapons which, though conventional, will be as destructive as certain nuclear arms. This possibility must be taken into account if Europe is to be made a zone of stability and security.

Further, the need for a comprehensive approach to the problem of radical troop and arms reduction stems from the importance this problem has assumed in the course of discussing the issue of delivering Europe from intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Those who want no agreements in this sphere are trying to make a case by referring to the old NATO propaganda lie about the Warsaw Treaty member states' overwhelming superiority in conventional arms. Regardless of the facts, which testify to an approximate strategic parity at this level, too, Western military-political circles continue to make statements like made by Bernard Rogers, Supreme Commander of NATO's forces in Europe, in Paris recently. He said that the widening gap between the NATO and Warsaw Treaty armed forces' fighting potentials was a matter of grave concern because the Soviet Union was quite likely to take advantage of this imbalance. The removal of any grounds for such instigatory statements would be a useful and wholesome thing in itself.

A drastic reduction of conventional arms and armed forces would also help to make headway, at last, at the Vienna negotiations which have been deadlocked for years. Finally, it would pave the way for the broadening of international economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation, so greatly desired by all European peoples, and help build confidence among them.

In making its latest proposals, the Soviet Union has introduced a new element into the discussion which is now in progress in Europe and worldwide on ways to deliver mankind completely from the threat of a nuclear catastrophe and the burden of the arms race.

■

DEDICATED TO SOCIALISM AND PEACE

Two major anniversaries in revolutionary history symbolically coincided with the recent Eleventh Congress of G.D.R. Communists. The day before upwards of 2,500 delegates and many foreign guests assembled for the opening of the congress in the Palast der Republik, the centenary of the birth of Ernst Thaelmann was widely observed in the country, and an attractive park with a statue of Thaelmann in its centre was opened in Berlin, a scene of the activity of this ardent proletarian revolutionary. Then, as the congress drew to a close, another historic date came up—the 40th anniversary of the merging of two working-class parties—Communist and Social Democratic—into the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

The G.D.R.'s first President Wilhelm Pieck noted at the time: "When these two working-class parties bridged their disastrous rift to combine as the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, this was fully in keeping with the ideas Ernst Thaelmann advocated. And when in founding the German Democratic Republic Germans established in their country their first ever worker-peasant state, it spelled a triumph for those great ideas for which Ernst Thaelmann lived, fought and suffered."

Thrifty

Before the congress we had the opportunity of visiting the VEB Carl Zeiss Jena, the Leipzig machine-tool plant and the Ludwigsfelde automobile plant. As everywhere in the republic, the mood was one of optimism. Those working in industry and on the land, in science and the arts, sought to make their contribution to solving the country's economic problems while sharing a common determination to preserve peace. Indeed, here, in the heart of Europe, where the armed forces of the two world systems face one another in dangerous proximity, one senses almost physically how vital it is never to relax the struggle against the nuclear threat.

We asked Karl-Heinz Stade, a blacksmith from the Ludwigsfelde automobile plant who had been elected a delegate to the congress, what he would report. Here is what he said:

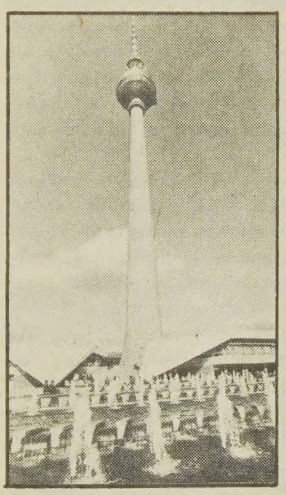
"Our collective has kept its word, even to the point of exceeding the pledges made in honour of the congress. We had promised to complete the programme for the first three months of the year a day and a half ahead of schedule, but managed to do so three days ahead. We also promised to produce 900,000 marks' worth of goods, but actually turned out more than 2 million marks' worth." How did they manage to do it? Every important economic task to be tackled whether by a workshop, a work team or an individual worker becomes increasingly an object of the Party's attention and its educational work on the factory floor. This concerns the saving of raw and other materials, rationalization, and the automation of sections and entire production lines. The Party is working for openness, for the involvement of everyone in monitoring the efficiency of the work, and is urging the daily, weekly and monthly analysis of results.

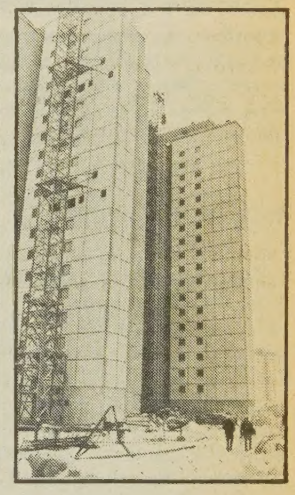
The workingman in the G.D.R. today is indeed an extremely conscientious worker, the real master both in his place of work and in his country.

After the Tenth SUPG Congress, the republic forged ahead as a politically stable socialist state with a highly efficient economy. This was noted by SUPG General Secretary Erich Honecker, in the Central Committee report presented to the congress. Every aspect of life in society, the productive forces and production relations, science, education and the arts, human relations and national defence saw continued improvement.

Both the report and the discussion it evoked laid emphasis on dovetailing economic and social policies. Here are some figures to show how thrifty G.D.R. workers are. Through the application of scientific and technological achievements alone the republic saves annually 500 million work hours, which is tantamount to having an additional 300,000 employees on the job. Over the past five years in its effort to supply the population and the economy with everything needed and also meet export targets, the G.D.R.'s industry has produced as much as had been manufactured in the twenty years between 1949 and 1968. Last year's grain harvest averaged 4.6 tons per hectare against a little over 4 tons in the 1970s. Over the past 15 years real incomes have doubled, and more than 7 million people have moved to 2,400,000 new or completely renovated flats.

"The fact that for more than 15 years the G.D.R. has shown a steady economic and social advance can justly be seen as a historic testimony to the potential





Berlin, capital of the G.D.R., is preparing to celebrate its 750th birthday. Like the country as a whole, the city grows younger and more vigorous from year to year. The young generation is building multistorey houses, learning to operate sophisticated machines and opening up new horizons of scientific and technological progress.
TASS photos

of real socialism," Erich Honecker said.

This potential will certainly grow, for socialism is energetically looking for ways of bringing about further improvement. This is illustrated by the economic strategy for the period up to the year 2000 elaborated by the congress. Its aim is to achieve a still more effective marriage of the advantages of socialism with the achievements of science and the technological revolution. This implies a faster growth of labour productivity and greater output despite a simultaneous reduction in the per unit expenditure of raw and other materials and energy. The aim is to produce only high-quality goods on a par with the world's best. This may be summed up as rationalization, more effective work and fewer workers producing more goods. It will be necessary to invest more consistently than before in order to modernize production. All branches of the economy must produce adequate quantities of the consumer goods that are in demand.

The SUPG's economic strategy is geared to the continuous and dynamic growth of the nation's economic strength. An economy of this order can only be based on a command of the new technologies, and a truly creative atmosphere in every area of social life.

Friends for All Time

The delegations and representatives from the 140 fraternal parties and other revolutionary parties, progressive organizations and movements from 104 countries who came to Berlin for the congress evinced deep comradely interest in the G.D.R.'s achievement record. This was especially in evidence in the speech by Mikhail Gorbachev, who led the CPSU delegation to the congress. He warmly saluted the fruitful work of the Communists, all the people of the G.D.R. to strengthen socialism in the country in which Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific communism, were born.

He also dwelt on the results and significance of the 27th CPSU Congress which had, he said, been characterized by an atmosphere of exacting self-criticism. Due to a number of factors of both an objective and subjective order, he noted, in the preceding stage our advance began to slow down and negative tendencies emerged. However, while recognizing this, we have no intention of underestimating our own achievements. Historically, Soviet economic, social and intellectual achievements are universally recognized. On the basis of what we have achieved we can and must advance much faster, overcoming bottlenecks, weaknesses and stagnation.

"It is sometimes wondered," he continued, "whether we are not overdoing self-criticism and thus fuelling anti-communist propaganda. I am certain that is not the case. Both Marx and Lenin taught that a critical attitude to its activities is indispensable for a revolutionary party's success. We have sought to observe this behest and in so doing we have the full support of the Communist Party and the entire Soviet people."

At the 27th CPSU Congress in Moscow Erich Honecker had cited Ernst Thaelmann's remarkable words that "socialism's victorious march in the Soviet Union is our most powerful argument." Speakers at the SUPG congress furnished many other convincing arguments. "From the rostrum of our Eleventh Party Congress," Erich Honecker declared to rousing applause, "we reaffirm the inviolability of that great revolutionary achievement, our unshakable fraternal alliance with the CPSU and the Soviet Union. This alliance is the foundation of all we have accomplished, and is of vital concern to our entire people."

Close cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and the G.D.R., cooperation between the socialist countries, is indispensable if we are to cope with the complex tasks and objectives confronting the socialist world at this current critical time.

"History demands of us," Mikhail Gorbachev said, "that we make fuller use of the advantages of the new social system to expedite scientific, technological, economic and social progress, and add new facets to the socialist way of life. This will have a decisive influence in enhancing the appeal of socialism and consolidating its position internationally. It is imperative as never before for us to curb the nuclear menace, bar the way to the imperialist hankering for aggression, and preserve and strengthen peace."

Holding Out a Hand, Not a Fist

Comparatively recently—at any rate people present at the Eleventh SUPG Congress would have certainly remembered it—the governments of many capitalist countries pretended to ignore the first German worker-peasant state. The G.D.R. was snubbed and for a long time it was thwarted in its attempts to join international governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Hence the impact the deliberations of the Eleventh SUPG Congress had around the world was considerable. Its discussions of the issues of war and peace, its assessment of the current international situation, and its condemnation of U.S. neocolonialist acts of aggression against Libya, Nicaragua and other sovereign states evoked comments the world over. The congress noted that owing to the policy influential circles in the U.S. and NATO were pursuing to escalate the arms race and step up confrontation, the international situation had deteriorated. In view of this situation that presents a threat to the survival of the human race, the SUPG sees the effort to reduce the threat of war as its paramount objective.

"The Soviet programme for the phased destruction of nuclear weapons by the close of the present century," G.D.R. Deputy Foreign Minister Herbert Krolikowski told your correspondents, "marks the beginning of a new offensive by the forces of progress to save civilization. We oppose the F.R.G.'s involvement in U.S. 'star wars' and are deeply perturbed by the accumulation of nuclear weaponry in the F.R.G., close to our borders. What goal could be more important to us than that of destroying nuclear weapons?"

At the congress this goal received vigorous support. Delegates voicing the resolve of all the citizens of the G.D.R. and guests who expressed the sentiments of nations around the world agreed that today the champions of peace had a well-thought-out, realistic and optimistic programme for delivering humanity from the menace of nuclear disaster.

Most significant in this respect was Mikhail Gorbachev's call from the capital of the socialist G.D.R. to all in Western Europe:

"Do not believe all the fabrications about Soviet aggressiveness. Never, on no account, will we fight Western Europe provided NATO attacks neither us nor our allies! I repeat, never!"

The Soviet leader backed up this assurance with a major new peace bid to agree on significant cuts in armed forces and armaments in Europe.

Rostock University Rector W. Brauer, a delegate to the congress, said:

"Thanks to the dynamic foreign policy of the Soviet Union, which so persistently and patiently seeks new ways and means to save humanity from the danger of sliding into the abyss of nuclear disaster, we have been able to sustain conditions for peaceful constructive endeavour. This policy—and this was repeatedly noted at our party forum—has the full support and approval of all citizens of the G.D.R."

Socialism, which has so genuine a stake in finding ways and means of reaching understanding and guaranteeing reliable security for all nations, holds out an open hand to the West, not a fist. The fact that this was reaffirmed so forcefully in Berlin makes the Eleventh SUPG Congress a high point in international life today.

L. YELISEYEV and B. PISHCHIK
Our Special Correspondents

LINK IN A CHAIN

What the aggressors wanted and what they got

Few in Washington talk about the victims of the raid, a BBC correspondent reported a day or two after the bombing of Tripoli. It is amazing how quickly the killed and maimed Libyan women and children have been forgotten in the American capital. But not everyone in the world has so callous a conscience and so short a memory. The aggression against Libya unquestionably left deep scars in the hearts not only of individuals but of entire peoples. Apart from everything else these dramatic April days spotlighted the meaning of the present U.S. Administration's neoglobalism and the consequences it is fraught with. The bombs dropped on Libyan cities dispelled many of the propaganda myths Washington uses to cover up this policy. They revealed secret designs that were carefully but unsuccessfully concealed.

First of all, the talk about the U.S. being opposed to terrorism was shown to be sheer bluff. Indeed, how can anyone seriously expect to be able to prevent terrorist acts by reacting to them with state terrorism carried out by the naval and air forces of the biggest imperialist power? Such a reaction is a greater crime than those committed by extremists who plant bombs in aircraft, for state terrorism not only takes a toll of innocent lives but places peace in jeopardy. All the more so since Washington has not been able to produce any evidence of Libya's involvement in terrorist acts, including the explosion in the West Berlin discotheque which was the pretext for the attack.

The official American version was believed only by those who very much wanted to believe it. And still less were there of those who had any faith in the argument that the aggression against Libya would scale down terrorism. Italian Prime Minister Craxi voiced a widespread view when he suggested that the attack would spark off an "eruption of fanaticism in the Moslem world."

Let us not conjecture on this score. The attack did indeed cause an eruption, if not of fanaticism, then of chauvinism in the United States. The anti-Libyan, anti-Arab campaign that had been going on for months and even years produced poisonous fruit. According to CBS television the bombing was acclaimed by 77 per cent of the Americans polled, of whom, however, 43 per cent voiced apprehensions that it could result in still more widespread terrorism. This was the reaction of the brainwashed. As for those who set the propaganda and war machines in motion, they could hardly have been unaware of what was perfectly clear to the far less informed public. It is questionable, to say the least, that the object of the air raids against Libyan cities really was to put a stop to terrorism. It is more likely that the idea was to give a new impetus to terrorism so as to use it again for

UPI dispatch, April 16: "President Reagan ... sat down with his top national security advisers last Wednesday [April 9] and said: 'Take the military route,' leading to the bombing of Libya five days later." The plan for the attack, which it was decided to make at night, was kept in strict secrecy. According to the Washington Post of April 20, the F-111 [Air Force] and A-6 [Navy] planes are the only ones in the U.S. arsenal capable of precision strikes at night and in all weathers. The swing-wing F-111 planes can develop a speed of 1,200 miles per hour, and the carrier-based A-6 Intruder bombers, 650 miles per hour. The U.S. has 180 F-111s at its Lakenheath and Upper Heyford bases in Britain. The direct route from there to Libya is 1,800 miles, but since France and Spain refused permission to enter their airspace, the planes had to fly more than 5,000 kilometres around Europe via Gibraltar and to be refuelled in the air four times on the way. At the same time, every effort was made to justify the crime. For instance, President Reagan said in a letter to the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives: "This necessary and appropriate action was a preemptive strike ... designed to deter acts of terrorism by Libya."

Tripoli. After the U.S. bombing raid.

Reuters—TASS photo

By the time the F-111 planes reached the Libyan coast, the A-6 navy bombers were also in their target areas. The bombing began at 2 a.m. Libyan time. At 2.02 the American NBC TV network began its on-the-spot broadcast. After an interval the raids were repeated in the early morning. Five targets had been selected. Precision-bombing, including laser, techniques were used, but this did not reduce the scale of the destruction or the number of victims. Bombs hit the building of the French Embassy and the residence of the Japanese Ambassador. The American CBS TV network set the number of killed and wounded Libyans at more than 100. According to other U.S. TV reports, 17 unexploded bombs were found after the raids, one of which exploded in a Tripoli street wounding three persons. Muammar Gaddafi's sixteen-month-old adopted daughter was killed and his two small sons were seriously injured.

nefarious purposes with even greater violence and a long-term objective in view.

Developments will in time cast more light on what went on behind the scenes. But the flash of bomb explosions did reveal something. For instance, the strike at what the Americans thought was the Tripoli "residence of Muammar Gaddafi" is indicative. It turns out that it was not by chance that his children's blood was shed: the U.S. flyers deliberately aimed their bombs at the Libyan leader's residence with the intention of killing him. An unnamed Administration spokesman said as much to a Washington Post correspondent.

Other Administration spokesmen blurted out more facts. The killing of Gaddafi, like the killing of Lumumba and Allende, was to serve as a signal for a coup and the installation in the saddle in Libya of individuals acceptable to Washington. What is not known is whether individuals ready to assume this role were found. What is known is that the very same Administration spokesmen complained about the "difficulty of sustaining covert operations in Libya" and "uncertainty in Washington about the size, strength and reliability of the anti-Gaddafi groups." And indeed do such groups exist at all?

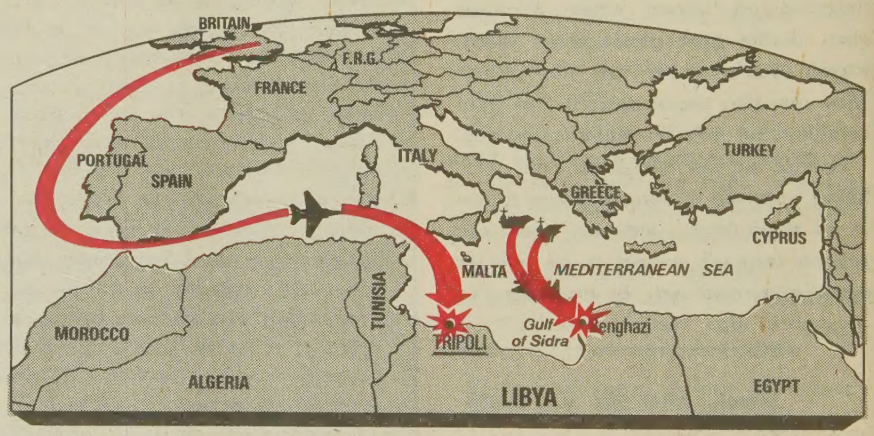
It is unlikely, of course, that there will be no more actions of this kind. As a matter of fact new bombings are already being planned. However that may be, the April raids produced results contrary to those expected by the aggressor. Apart from meeting with staunch resistance, the U.S. lost several planes, though it prefers not to admit the full extent of its losses. The important thing in the opinion of observers is that support of Libya's anti-imperialist policy by the majority of the population did not wane, on the contrary, it grew stronger. No less important is it that the developments once again confirmed that the Arab peoples are not alone in their trying ordeals. "The U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries," Mikhail Gorbachev said in Berlin on April 18, "are demonstrating by word and deed their solidarity with Libya." And this, of course, affects the situation over the entire vast area from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.

But perhaps the U.S. did succeed in frightening some Arab countries, in setting them one against the other by capitalizing on the differences between the social systems and the political orientations of the countries of the region? It is nobody's secret that Washington and Tel Aviv have long speculated on inter-Arab discord with the object, among others, of imposing a capitulationist model of a Middle East settlement. The latest round in these efforts was undertaken last year. But the results were nil. In these circumstances the U.S. ruling quarters, together with their Israeli partners, once again decided to take armed action against the most intransigent Arab states. Tel Aviv began preparing for a strike at Syria from the Golan Heights and through the "Lebanese gateway." Washington undertook to deal with Libya. As regards what the West calls "moderate" countries, they were to be neutralized by financial handouts. A few days before the attack against Libya, the U.S. press mounted a publicity campaign for the so-called "Marshall plan for the Middle East" advocated by the Israeli Prime Minister. An attempt was made to impel Egypt to take military action against Libya.

It is to Cairo's credit that, despite the long-standing tension in its relations with Tripoli, it did not succumb to the pressure. More, Egypt came out against the U.S. attack in unambiguous terms. So did the Persian Gulf monarchies, including Saudi Arabia. True, they confined themselves to diplomatic protests; the practical measures Gaddafi called for were not taken. There is still room for more Arab solidarity, many of its advocates believe. Nevertheless, Washington this time did not succeed in deepening divisions among the Arab countries. Even the most "moderate" of them could not but see the threat connivance with U.S. imperialism presents to the Arabs. The shelling of Lebanon by the U.S. battleship New Jersey three years ago might still have seemed a transient episode borrowed from the colonial past, and not a precedent for the future. Now it is clear that the use of force against the Arab peoples is being made the regular practice. Could even close friends of the U.S. tolerate this?

Consequently, as the Washington Post observed, usually pro-Western countries which play an important role in the Middle East joined with the radical countries in condemning the U.S. attack on Libya. In this connection the American news analysts Rowland Evans and Robert Novak speak of the "corrosion" of the once close ties between the United States and the Middle East.

In this context it would perhaps be more in place to use the word "corrosion" to describe the state of relations between the U.S. and Western Europe. In the opinion of the London Times there is a "real danger" of a split in NATO. This might be an exaggeration, but the fact remains that West Europeans saw an alarming symptom in the fact that the "senior partner" did not even bother to inform them of the attack in preparation. As if it did not affect them in any way. Yet it is from this particular area that Western Europe obtains the oil it needs. Moreover, it directly ad-



joins the sphere of operations of the Atlantic bloc. The spearhead of the bloc's "southern flank" is the very same U.S. Sixth Fleet which took part in the anti-Libya operation. In these circumstances NATO could easily find itself at the danger point, all the more so since the Mediterranean has long been saturated with nuclear weapons.

As recently as the end of March Washington turned down the Soviet proposal that the Soviet and U.S. naval forces be withdrawn from the Mediterranean—an automatic reaction, so to speak, to Soviet peace initiatives. The provocative nuclear explosions in Nevada in reply to the Soviet moratorium, the stepped-up realization of the SDI programme in response to the worldwide public demand for an end to the militarization of outer space, the beginning of the supply of the latest Stinger missiles to the Afghan counterrevolutionaries and the UNITA bands, the preparation of the invasion of Nicaragua, and finally the savage air raids against Libya. There is no doubt that all these are links in one chain, cogs in the same sinister machine powered by Washington by means of the arms buildup and the so-called regional conflicts. In this sense the Libyan precedent extends beyond the bounds of the Middle East. It shows that neoglobalism, aimed against the developing countries, is an element of the overall policy of aggravating international tension, at the deliberate deterioration of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and East-West relations in general. Hence the growing threat to world peace contained in this policy.

The European members of NATO have indeed much food for thought. And they are pondering the situation, though their anxiety is expressed in different ways. The French authorities refused to allow the U.S. bombers to fly over French territory on their way to Libya, a move that met with the approval of the most diverse political forces of that country. And in Britain, whose government gave the green light to the bombers taking off from U.S. bases in Britain, Margaret Thatcher's loyalty to her overseas patrons was criticized by about three quarters of the population, including many of her Conservative associates (see report on next page). This, of course, is not yet evidence of the readiness of the West European politicians to restrain the U.S. generals each time they embark on another neoglobalist, or, to be more precise, neocolonialist adventure. Indicative in this respect is the fact that the French delegate in the Security Council joined in the U.S.-British veto.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the Reagan Administration accomplished nothing by its brigand raid. On the one hand, it worsened the international situation further, and, on the other, did a favour to the military-industrial quarters, who expect of Washington not only bellicose rhetoric, but acceleration of the arms buildup and military actions.

The fact is, however, that in our day and age such actions yield no more political advantages than does militarist rhetoric. The well-known American news analyst Stephen Rosenfeld observed after the bombing of Libya that although Reagan in the more than five years in government has spent enormous sums on defence and claims to have done much to restore U.S. prestige and power, he has nothing definite to point to, apart from Grenada. Gaddafi's behaviour is provocative, Rosenfeld says, Ortega's stance is firmer than ever, and Moscow rejects Reagan's arms control terms.

We shall not argue about what is meant by provocative behaviour and what Reagan's arms control terms amount to. The important thing is that nothing can be forced on anyone and nothing definite can be gained by the use of crude force. In the final analysis it inevitably backfires against those who try to substitute might for right. Surely Washington, whether it wants to or not, will have to remember the innocent victims of its aggression. The anger of all humanity will not allow it to forget. And perhaps all that has happened will compel the powers that be in the United States to give thought to the impermissibility of Stone Age thinking in our nuclear age. ■

U.S. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman observed that it was useful to see which of the United States' allies would stand by it. As it was, Britain was the only European country to join in the operation. Spain and Greece declared that they would not allow bases on their territory to be used for an attack on Libya, the London Times reported on April 15. Following a meeting of the foreign ministers of the 12 EEC countries, the Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek told the press on April 14 that the decisions of the meeting should be regarded as a call to the U.S. and Libya to refrain from actions that could aggravate tension. This was just before the U.S. brigand operation. After it, mass protest demonstrations were held in many cities in Italy, the F.R.G., Britain and other countries.

World public opinion has strongly condemned the latest U.S. aggressive action. This worldwide condemnation found reflection also in a relevant resolution submitted to the U.N. Security Council, but on April 21, when it was put to the vote, the U.S., France and Britain used their veto power to prevent its adoption.

CORRESPONDENTS' DISPATCHES

● **ALGIERS**

AGGRESSION STRUCK NEXT DOOR

The Libyan Jamahiriya is Algeria's neighbour. The day before the American brigand raid, when there were unmistakable signs that aggression was in the offing, head of the Permanent Secretariat of the Algerian National Liberation Front Cherif Messadia paid a visit to Tripoli and handed Muammar Gaddafi a message from President Bendjedid expressing Algeria's solidarity with the Libyan people.

On April 14 Algerian Foreign Minister Taleb Ibrahimi talked with the

ambassadors of France, the F.R.G., Italy, Britain and Spain accredited to Algeria. The use of armed force against Libya by the U.S., he said, would aggravate tension in the Mediterranean and give rise to an emergency situation that would place the peace and stability of the region in jeopardy. The Arab League, which has its headquarters in the capital of Tunisia, likewise issued an appeal to reason and common sense. When the U.S. Administration ignored all these appeals a wave of wrath and indignation swept Algeria.

Speaking at a mass solidarity rally in the Algerian capital, Bachir Khaldoun, member of the NLF Permanent Secretariat, said that the barbarous raid was levelled not only at Libya but at the whole Arab world. Today the need for unity among Arab countries is greater than ever before if the global strategy of American imperialism is to be countered, Sadek Zouaten, another NLF leader, declared. Algeria has called for an urgent summit meeting of the Arab countries to work out joint countermeasures against the aggressor. At this anxious time for all Arabs the position of firm support for the Libyan people expressed by the U.S.S.R. is deeply appreciated in Algeria.

● NEW YORK

MACABRE JUBILATION

Having bombed residential areas of Tripoli, sown death and destruction, and forfeited the lives of its own flyers in the barbarous raid on Libya, the White House is jubilantly counting up popularity points for the President. But that is not the whole picture.

"Violence and death are seldom cause for celebration," news analyst Tom Wicker says.

"All of these things indicate a disjointed, incoherent foreign policy that could end up with something very real in the way of conflict," Republican Senator Lowell P. Weicker comments.

But these voices, like the protests of many ordinary Americans, are drowned in the flood of self-adulation let loose by the Reagan Administration. It is out to capitalize on the gullibility of the man in the street.

Innocent people, among them women and children, have been killed. Yet Defence Secretary Weinberger has the temerity to say: "What we have are Libyan reports to that effect, which I'm surprised are accepted immediately." But the reports are not only from Libyan sources. "Rescuers found the body of Mohammed Ibrahim al-Shirkawy, an elderly merchant, ... buried in rubble on the top-floor bedroom"—this from an Associated Press correspondent. And in another house reporters walked through pools of blood in what had been a children's room.

Most Americans do not express doubts as to whether the organizers of the savage action against Libya were guided by common sense. As for those who are able to break out of the grip of the chauvinistic hysteria, there is a ready-made label: they are "non-patriots" which is next door to being "Red."

The powers that be are worried about something else. The worldwide reaction, which is the exact opposite of the jubilation in the corridors of the White House, has astounded Washington, a New York TV commentator observed. It is easier to enumerate the countries that have not condemned the U.S. aggression than those that have. Only Canada, Chile, Israel and South Africa "sympathize" with the aggressors, not counting Britain, who was an accomplice in the crime and had only nice things to say about the American leadership when the question was examined in the Security Council. The United States' U.N. Ambassador, retired General Vernon A. Walters, complained to your correspondent that "if you were an American of my generation you would have to hear so much criticism that you would not take it seriously." This candid admission confirms that riding roughshod over the norms of international law has become standard White House policy, and that the aggression against Libya was only a new stage in the dangerous course it is steering.

● LONDON

PRICE OF COMPLICITY

On Tuesday, April 15, when a rainy dawn had barely come to London, ITV television, which is the first to go on the air, reported that during the night the U.S. had carried out an air raid on Libya. A panorama of Tripoli at night seen by the U.S. flyers as they came over appeared on television screens. The peaceful city was asleep, and only the street lights delineated its contours. Then the sky burst into fiery flashes. The crime had been committed. The news came as a shock to the British public, which is opposed to Washington's anti-Libya campaign. But there was another surprise in store for it that morning.

In the previous several days the press, radio and television had assured the public that the government had doubts as to the expediency of military action against Libya and at any rate would not agree to the use of the U.S. air bases in Britain for this purpose. But all this proved to be sheer deception. More than half of the American aircraft sent out that night to Libya took off from airfields in Britain. For the first time since the end of World War II Britain became a springboard for U.S. bombing raids, this time against a peaceable sovereign state.

The Tory cabinet not only became an accomplice in the piratic action of the

THE LEGAL ASPECT

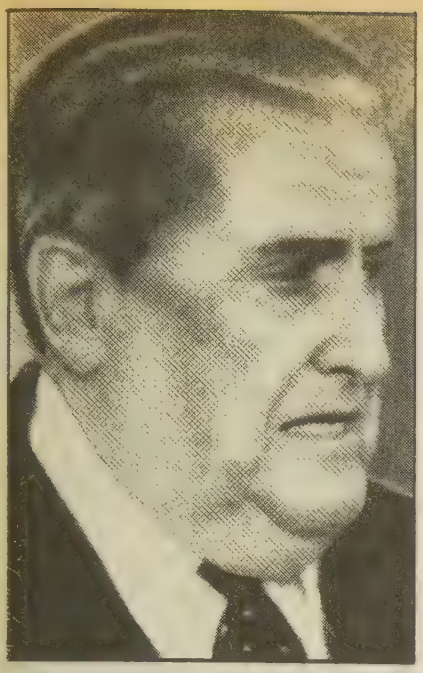
In his recent television appearance, Ronald Reagan tried to justify the piratical attacks on Tripoli and Benghazi with U.S. self-defence considerations in full accord with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter. The President added that the attacks had constituted preventive action against Libyan "terrorist objectives."

Indeed, Article 51 of the U.N. Charter provides for a nation's "inherent right of individual or collective self-defence." But the article stipulates that this right can be acted upon only if "an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations." Has Libya attacked U.S. territory? It has not. Article 51 therefore justifies Libya's defensive action against the U.S. air and naval attack.

Under Article 51, the measures taken by a country in the exercise of this right of self-defence "shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council." In ordering the bombardment of the Libyan cities, the U.S. President failed to comply with these requirements either before or after the attack.

By describing the attack as a "preventive action" against "terrorist objectives," the President fatally undermined his own case. International law admits of no "preventive action" in self-defence, because such action falls into the category of unprovoked aggression rather than that of self-defence. The American attack on Libya is a case in point.

Under the U.N. Charter, "all members



Vernon A. Walters, United States U.N. Ambassador, visited a number of West European countries on a special mission from the U.S. President to solicit support for the anti-Libyan aggression. Britain alone agreed to be an accomplice in the action.

Photo from International Herald Tribune

White House, but in effect gave the go-ahead signal for it. According to the Washington correspondent of the London Standard, the exact time for the raid on Libyan cities was set after Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had given an affirmative answer to Reagan's request for permission to use the F-111 aircraft based in Britain in the operation. "Pentagon officials said once she had given her consent, the plan began to move ahead at full speed," the paper reported.

Why was it so important for Washington to get Britain's consent? The official version is that without the F-111s based in Britain the strike at Libya would have been less effective. Many local observers, however, question this. For a U.S. Sixth Fleet naval force, including the aircraft carriers America and Coral Sea, had been concentrated off the Libyan coast before the attack. The strike strength of this force was more than enough for the operation. Consequently, there was no military need to send the F-111 fighters into action. It was for political reasons that Washington wanted to involve its European allies in the attack on Libya. The British government hastened to come to the assistance of the United States. At a meeting of the EEC foreign ministers in The Hague, the British representative Geoffrey Howe urged his colleagues to join in anti-Libyan actions, but none of the others responded. Moreover, Paris, Madrid and Lisbon declared in strong terms against overflights of their territory by U.S. bombers.

The crash of American bombs and missiles in Libyan cities set off in the British Isles a wave of anger and protest. The Thatcher government found itself under a barrage of annihilating criticism not only from the opposition, but also from its own party. And the tide of mass protest continued to rise, as more details of the savage bombing became known. The British were outraged to learn that, contrary to the assurances given by President Reagan, the targets of the strikes were not military installations and not nonexisting "terrorist training centres," but peaceable residential areas. Children, women and the aged died under the ruins. Already on Tuesday evening a mass protest demonstration was held in the centre of London. The police made 160 arrests. On Wednesday, the Times and Daily Telegraph carried the results of public opinion polls which revealed that the Thatcher government's involvement in the aggression was condemned by 81 per cent of the British public.

Unprecedentedly heated debates took place in Parliament. Labour leader Neil Kinnock bluntly accused the Prime Minister of servility to the U.S. President. The British people, Liberal leader David Steel said, want a Prime Minister who at least sometimes would say no to the incumbent of the White House.

Shadow Foreign Secretary Denis Healey, refuting the arguments of Thatcher's supporters, said the anti-Libya action had nothing in common either with international law in general or with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter which Washington invokes.

The 41st annual general meeting of the British U.N. Association in session at the time in Manchester condemned Washington's anti-Libya campaign in strong terms. The chairman of the Association, Lord Ennals, told your correspondent that he could only deplore his country's involvement in this lawless White House action. Many in Britain believe that the government will still have to give some serious thought to the consequences of this dramatic and ill-considered decision.

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aall refrain in their international rela-ons from the threat or use of force gainst the territorial integrity or polit-al independence of any state or in any ther manner inconsistent with the pur-oses of the United Nations" (Article 2, aragraph 4 of the U.N. Charter). In 970 the U.N. adopted the Declaration n Principles of International Law which ays that "the threat or use of force aall never be employed as the means settling international issues" and that ates "have a duty to refrain from acts reprisal involving the use of force" Resolution No. 2625 of the 25th Gen-al Assembly session). I was party to e elaboration of this declaration, and I an testify that the U.S. delegation fully ccepted it.

The U.N. General Assembly worked r years before arriving at the final finition of aggression in 1974 which id that "the first use of armed force by state in contravention of the Charter aall constitute prima facie evidence of an act of aggression." In the same document aggression is defined as "the use of armed force by a state against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations." The aggressive action the U.S. has been taking against Libya in March-April 1986 corresponds detail for detail to the definition set out in the Charter.

Article 5 of a resolution adopted by the 29th General Assembly (1974) contains two important provisions. First: "No consideration of whatever nature, whether political, economic, military or otherwise, may serve as a justification for aggression." And second, "a war of aggression is a crime against international peace. Aggression gives rise to international responsibility." The U.S. has committed an international crime and for that it must bear material, moral and political responsibility.

Prof. R. TUZMUKHAMEDOV, LL.D.

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Lukas Beckmann:

WE ARE AGAINST SDI

A delegation from the Green Party, F.R.G., comprising its co-chairmen Lukas Beckmann, Jutta Ditfurt and Rainer Trampert, and Norbert Kostede, a member of the board, has visited the U.S.S.R. at the invitation of the CPSU Central Committee. The guests met with Soviet party leaders and statesmen. Before the delegation's departure, our reporter Roman Krestyaninov had a talk with LUKAS BECKMANN.

Herr Beckmann, as far as I know this is your first time in our country. What are your main impressions?

The size and diversity of your country are striking. Leningrad, especially Piskaryovo Cemetery, where about 500,000 victims of German nazism are buried, made the deepest impression on us. Although many of the Greens are young people, nazism is recent history for them. We want out present and our future to have no room for such phenomena.

So you weren't in two minds about the answer to the question of whether May 8 had brought the Germans liberation or defeat?

It was the day of liberation for all of us. The Greens were bitterly disappointed by the way the F.R.G. ruling parties observed the 40th anniversary of the surrender of the Wehrmacht. Reagan's visit to Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen came as a terrible shock to us. Only the statement by Federal President von Weizsäcker was an encouraging exception.

How did your meetings and talks with Soviet leaders impress you? Did you prove to have views in common on vital international issues?

We had very interesting, frank and lively talks in the course of which we discussed peace, protection of the environment, economic progress and other topical issues. The Soviet disarmament proposals were in the focus of attention. I must say that our views on the cardinal issues connected with the strengthening of peace and security largely coincided. However, we didn't quite see eye to eye on how to approach the problem of unilateral disarmament.

What is your attitude to Mikhail Gorbachev's proposals for a stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, ending nuclear tests, preventing the militarization of outer space and withdrawing intermediate-range missiles from Europe?

We in the F.R.G. have wholeheartedly welcomed all the proposals in Mikhail Gorbachev's January 15 statement. They are of an extremely positive character and could bring about a historic breakthrough in the matter of disarmament. What is needed now is a positive response from the other side. The proposal to end nuclear tests is an excellent chance which the Americans have not so far taken up. Hopefully, the West European countries will ultimately manage to press the American government into revising its position. Regrettably, the current U.S. Administration is not interested in disarmament. Therefore the Soviet proposal that negotiations on intermediate-range missiles be started independently of the SDI issue imparts a very important nuance to this aspect of disarmament. The putting forward of a European initiative becomes possible, because in this matter Western Europe is less dependent on the Americans than it is in others. Will this be enough? Time will show.

How have you taken the American resumption of nuclear tests in Nevada?

Technically, politically, militarily and strategically, the easiest way to get the disarmament process going is by ending nuclear tests. The fact that this proposal has brought no political response is scandalous.

What is your attitude to the SDI programme and the Americans' attempts to involve their West European allies in its implementation?

We object to the SDI programme and to the West European countries' involvement in it. We do not want the F.R.G. government to take part in it. SDI is a military rather than a civil project. It will intensify the arms race in all spheres and escalate it to a still higher qualitative and quantitative level. Those who want more arms are mad. The earth is larded with weapons of mass destruction, and now the same fate is being reserved for outer space. People's chances of survival are diminishing from day to day. SDI is an extremely dangerous project.

What is the membership of your party, and how do you rate its chances of success in the coming political struggle in the F.R.G.?

We have three thousand representatives elected to many municipalities, most state parliaments, the Bundestag, and also to the European Parliament. Our party has won from 6 to 8 per cent of the vote, even up to 15 per cent in some cities. In 1985 we lost the elections in Saarland and North Rhine-Westphalia, but our showing in the recent municipal elections was quite good —7.8 to 8 per cent, on average. The outlook for the January 1987 elections in Bavaria, Lower Saxony and Bonn is bright. Over the seven years of our party's existence its membership has grown to an impressive 40,000. The strength of the Green Party lies not only in its size but also in the fact that we keep coming up with new ideas, spotlighting problems of vital interest to people, and submit to national discussion issues which certain circles are trying to hush up—such as protection of the environment and disarmament policy.

Are you satisfied with your representatives' activity in elected government bodies?

In parliaments, bills are enacted by a majority vote. The only state where we work in coalition with the SDP is Hesse. Together with the Social Democrats, however, we are in the majority in 30-40 cities where we have had various decisions adopted on such matters as, for example, environmental protection and restrictions on the use of atomic energy. Much has been done in the social, transport and health spheres. Our growing party sets high standards for its representatives in elected government bodies: we expect them to be not only vigorous, but also well informed. At any rate, it is safe to claim that the Greens have done very useful work—and that in a mere seven years.

■

U.S.S.R.—JAPAN

PROMISING PROSPECTS

The tenth joint meeting of the Soviet-Japanese and Japanese-Soviet economic cooperation committees held in Moscow on April 15-17 testified to the mutual desire of the U.S.S.R. and Japan to develop their trade and economic relations on a mutually beneficial and equal basis. Indicative of the interest displayed by Japanese business quarters in the expansion of ties with the U.S.S.R. was the representative character of the Japanese delegation, which included some 250 heads of leading firms. Both sides gave a positive appraisal of the outcome of the meeting. Particular note was made of the fact that, as distinct from the two preceding years, Soviet-Japanese trade in 1985 was again on the upgrade, reaching a total of 3.2 billion rubles. The central question was the search for new forms of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation. Both sides believe that it is essential to promote such promising areas of joint effort as industrial cooperation, reconstruction and modernization of enterprises in a number of branches of Soviet industry, and scientific and technological exchanges.

In an interview to your correspondent the president of the leading commercial firm Mitsui bussan, Kochiro Ejiri, pointed to the reliable and stable character of its relations with Soviet foreign trade organizations with which it has been cooperating for more than 30 years.

"The present volume of Japanese-Soviet trade," he said, "is obviously inadequate. The vast potentials of the U.S.S.R. and Japan are not fully utilized. The U.S.S.R. accounts for only 1.4 per cent of Japan's foreign trade, and Japan, for 2.5 per cent of the Soviet Union's. In the course of the meeting we gained the impression that the Soviet side, like the Japanese, is eager to increase mutually advantageous exchange. I believe that the prospects are good for the realization of this common striving."

In the opinion of Kochiro Ejiri, trade today is not only a matter of exchange of goods but of cooperation in production and marketing, for which ever new forms must be sought. The Moscow meeting offered an opportunity for a frank exchange of views on many issues and, in particular, on the imbalance in Japanese-Soviet trade. To remedy the situation, Soviet organizations, naturally, are interested in increasing their exports to Japan. On its part, Japan welcomes expansion of the import from the U.S.S.R. of high-quality goods for which there is a demand on the Japanese market.

The leaders of the Japanese delegation were received by U.S.S.R. Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov. Drawing attention to the favourable opportunities for widening commercial ties between the two countries, he stressed that these ties can and should play an important role in promoting mutual understanding and trust between the U.S.S.R. and Japan.

The Moscow meeting gave a new impulse to the development of Soviet-Japanese trade and economic relations, and we are looking forward with keen interest to the resumption this year of the work of the Soviet-Japanese intergovernmental commission on scientific and technological cooperation and to the Japanese trade and industrial exhibition scheduled to open in Moscow in October.

V. OVSYANNIKOV

U.S.A.—NICARAGUA

BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

On April 16, after a second round of debates, the U.S. House of Representatives voted by an overwhelming majority against President Reagan's request for a $100 million handout to the Nicaraguan contras.

Even Republican Congressmen failed to rally to the President's support. Yet paradoxical as it may seem at first glance, precisely this outcome suits the White House best in the present conditions. The Republican Congressmen's stance is merely an adroit tactical manoeuvre aimed at postponing a final decision on this controversial issue till better days, when the Administration hopes eventually to get both Congress and the public to see things as it does. For the time being, according to public opinion polls, 62 per cent of the Americans interviewed oppose giving aid to the contras, fearful that the Administration might involve the nation in a military adventure.

Neither do Democrat Congressmen intend to dismiss the presidential request out of hand. The debates revealed that they simply seek to make it a bargaining counter with the Republican Administration in the hope that a little give and take will lead to agreement on other controversial issues. In principle, neither party is opposed to intervention in Nicaraguan affairs. The difference is only as to how to go about it. Unlike the Republicans, the Democrats believe economic and political pressure on Central American states to be more effective than covert or, worse, overt, aggression.

For tactical reasons the House of Representatives, where the Democrats are in the majority, has incorporated the request for aid to the contras in a bill for additional allocations in other areas in the course of this year. Many items of this bill conflict with the Administration's policy of cutting back on social budgets. The President is now faced with the dilemma of either rejecting the bill and thus abandoning his cherished contras-aid programme, or of accepting it in toto along with items that do not fit in with White House plans.

The Republicans desperately sought to save the Administration from falling into this procedural trap by responding with support for Democrat Lee Hamilton's amendment, which allows the spending of $27 million to meet the needs of so-called "Nicaraguan refugees."

Obviously this money could be used to subsidize the contras, while the $100 million project is shelved for the time being. The more so as on April 14 the CIA admitted that despite the ban still in operation, it was using its own funds to finance the Nicaraguan contras.

V. KULISTIKOV

The election victory of the right in France was widely described as a "programmed sensation." Why the right shift? And what is the new government's programme?

THE CHANGEOVER

The takeover of power by the right-wing opposition from the Socialists was swift and smooth. The list of ministers headed by Jacques Chirac was announced several days after the parliamentary elections. Persons close to the head of government, that is members of the Alliance for the Republic, hold the key posts. They control the economy, finance and the Ministry of the Interior, that is the strategic positions in the cabinet's home policies. Another group belonging to the new majority—the Union for French Democracy—has been allowed a few paltry crumbs. Although the distribution of posts appears to be balanced, the representatives of the right-of-centre UFD have been compelled to content themselves with portfolios of secondary importance.

The Right Announce Their Programme

Broadly speaking, the right-wing parties now hold practically all the levers of power, including the premiership, the government and an absolute (if small) majority in parliament. In the localities they control the councils in 70 departments out of 96, and in the municipalities of most large cities. The Elysée Palace—residence of the head of state—is the exception. And President François Mitterrand, who is vested with extensive powers under the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, intends to exercise them fully.

The shift to the right in France is perceptible. The Alliance for the Republic and the Union for French Democracy together with the ultra-right National Front have won 55 per cent of the votes, whereas the left got 45 per cent. This is the most unfavourable balance of forces the democrats have faced in the last quarter of a century.

The new cabinet has announced its programme. Addressing the National Assembly, Jacques Chirac proclaimed a course for a "healthier economy." He set the ambitious objective of catching up with the economic levels of France's leading competitor-partners, in particular the F.R.G. The pivot of the economic programme is denationalization. The government has announced the list of banks, companies and firms it intends to privatize in the next five years. It includes 42 banks, three insurance companies and nine industrial enterprises nationalized under General de Gaulle in the late 1940s and after 1981.

It is proposed to lift price controls and abolish taxes on large fortunes. Restrictions on the import and export of capital have already been removed. These steps have opened up considerable opportunities for French monopolies to engage in financial operations. They will also bring in more foreign investment. The devaluation of the franc has paved the way for the expansion of French capital on foreign markets. The Chirac cabinet intends to conduct a tougher social policy. It is proposed to abolish restrictions on the dismissal of employees, freeze public sector wages, and cut back state expenditure.

The entrepreneurs have long been demanding an end to "dirigisme," i.e., state control. Yielding to the pressure of financial and industrial circles during the last few years of their term of office, the Socialists were forced to practise methods of Reaganomics. The austerity policy of the Fabius cabinet hardly differed from the policies of the British, U.S. and F.R.G. governments. Some of the ideologues of the French Socialist Party had already proposed a departure from the "dogma" of state intervention in the economy and questioned the expediency of nationalization. It looked as if the FSP was paving the way for Big Business factions that saw their future in greater West European integration and insisted on winding up industries they thought unprofitable.

With the assumption of power by the Chirac cabinet, capital has inhaled, as Fortune—the mouthpiece of U.S. Big Business—gleefully put it, "a deep breath of oxygen." The journal has more in mind than just the far-reaching political plans of the U.S. transnational corporations. The men across the ocean are already calculating the profits they will be able to pocket from the sale of shares of French banks and industries that come up for denationalization. Evan Galbraith, former U.S. ambassador to Paris, who now works for the Morgan Stanley Bank in New York, is pleased: "We're very interested in being underwriters of the new issues. Our clients did very well last year in French stocks."

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, which reflects the views of West German conservative circles, frankly suggests that the new French government realize the proposed programme in full. The paper believes that excessive caution and delay will only sap the confidence of foreign financial circles in France.

The Chirac government is obviously in haste to accomplish the plans it has announced. In the field of politics it is eager to rescind the proportional representation the Socialists introduced in 1985 and restore the straight majority voting that had been in force since 1958. Within the ruling majority there are two trends. The ultra-conservatives—mainly members of the new generation of UFD politicians—demand that France be overhauled completely on the conservative model. The moderates believe it is necessary to show discretion and take account of objective factors. They warn that the majority controlled by the present coalition in the National Assembly is neither stable nor overwhelming.

"The Rules of the Game"

At present both the Elysée Palace and the Hôtel Matignon (the residence of the president and the seat of the government respectively) have demonstrated their readiness to observe the rules of the political game. However, not everything is going smoothly. The prime minister has declared his intention to implement measures by means of decrees. This procedure makes it possibile to avoid protracted parliamentary debates and manifestations of possible differences within the ruling camp. A decree acquires force, however, only if it is signed by the head of state. President François Mitterrand has stated that, in principle, he does not object to such practices, but has unequivocally warned that he will not sign decrees that question the social achievements approved by the previous

parliament, i.e., when the FSP was in power.

A certain friction has developed between the president and the government because of differences in their interpretation of their powers in the sphere of foreign policy. Referring to the traditions and practices of the Fifth Republic, the head of state maintains that it is he who bears the main responsibility for the country's course in international affairs. Jacques Chirac, the Premier, intends to share this responsibility. He has announced his decision to attend the summit meeting of the leading Western countries to be held in Tokyo early in May. The press believes that this may give rise to differences between him and the president.

However, further developments in France depend more on the general evolution of the balance of socio-political forces, rather than on the vicissitudes of "cohabitation." The French Socialist Party does not conceal its intention to regain power in the foreseeable future. Today its leaders have set themselves the goal of winning at least 40 per cent of the vote. They believe this would secure victory for them. Some of them are prepared to support the introduction of the "swing" in France, i.e., bourgeois parties and Social Democrats alternating in power as in other West European countries.

Meanwhile the Socialists are professing loyalty to left-wing ideas. André Lagnelé, a leading party ideologue, says that in opposition the FSP should maintain the ideological stand it took in the 1970s, including its thesis about "breaking with capitalism." But once it had assumed power the FSP committed these policies to oblivion. More than that, the policies it did pursue actually destroyed the faith of the masses in the "alternative of the left."

In the period 1983-85 perceptible changes took place in the sentiments of the public at large, as the people had begun to lose faith in the possibility of resolving the crisis by political means, providing employment and lessening social inequality. It was not without the active help of Socialist leaders that ideas borrowed from the U.S. and British "new right" and the worship of private enterprise gained general currency. Mass unemployment and fear for the future, which affected young people most of all, bred political apathy, individualism and the desire to withdraw. There were outbursts of racism which nourished the ultra-right. Profound disillusionment and discontent with the left-wing parties set in. It was these factors that determined the shift to the right in the country's political life.

Of course, the Socialist Party still wields considerable influence. However, it has not yet resolved the crucial problem of political alliances. With which parties should it establish cooperation? Which social groups does it intend to rely on to secure its aims?

The scientific-technological revolution in France has increased the share of the "new middle class"—engineering and technical personnel, blue collar office employees. The overwhelming majority of these people gravitate towards a "risk-free" society, "social partnership," i.e., they are willing to play the game according to capitalist rules. It is on them that the Socialist leaders have pinned their hopes for the future. In a recent interview ex-premier Pierre Mauroy said it was vital to revise the earlier concept of forming a broad federation around the working class under the aegis of the Socialists. He believes that a growing middle class made up of a variety of groups is taking shape and that the party should look to it for support.

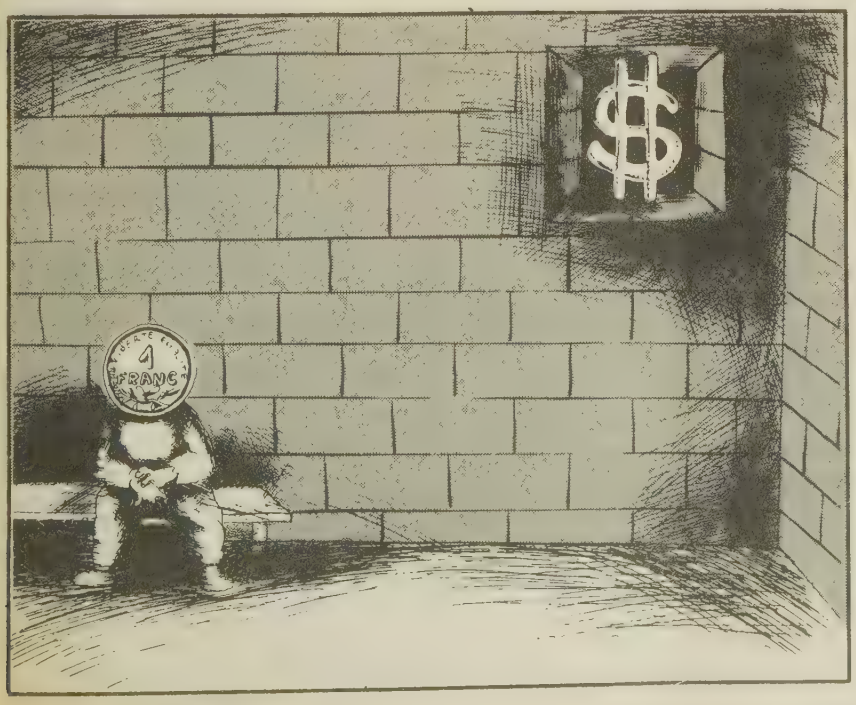
In the unusual context of "cohabitation" the Socialists must resolve an awkward dilemma. On the one hand, as an opposition party, the FSP will be compelled to criticize the government sharply on the entire range of questions relating to home and foreign policy. On the other, this tough stand will be detrimental to the president, for whom the Socialists miss no chance of demonstrating their support. As Libération, a paper close to the FSP, put it, the Socialists will have to combine firmness and rigorousness with moderation and tolerance. In short, they will have to walk a tightrope.

While the media are discussing various aspects of "cohabitation," political commentators are dealing with other important questions: how will the social situation develop? Is "cohabitation" possible between the broad masses and Big Business, once it has acquired greater freedom of manoeuvre? The paramount question is: what are the prospects for the mass movement? Under the Socialists it waned perceptibly. There are many reasons for this, above all the crisis. In its grasp the militant spirit of the working people tends to flag. In addition, in the eyes of large sections of the public, action against Big Business interests was identified with the struggle against the left-wing government. The fact that the leading trade unions, the General Confederation of Labour and the Democratic Confederation of Labour in particular, rendered it support in the early period caused a lot of confusion in the minds of the masses.

Today the situation is much more clear-cut. Most trade unions, including some reformist ones, have taken action against the measures of the Chirac cabinet in the socio-economic sphere. The General Confederation of Labour has taken a most determined stand. The clash between the trade union federations and Big Business will, it seems, be a fierce one.

V. SEMYONOV

This is the Paris L'Humanité comment on the devaluation of the franc by the Chirac government. The overseas tycoons will be delighted.



President Reagan said: "Take the military route!"

His Secretary of State Shultz said America must concentrate on making it clear that it is doing the right thing.

Concentrating on doing the right thing, as per orders, the U.S. pilots took off on their F-111s from bases in Britain and set a course for Libya. The F-111s carried out the assignment to strengthen the security of the civilized community and to fight terrorism: dozens of terrorists between the ages of 16 months and five years were killed or crippled in their cots.

By bombing peaceful Libyan cities, the American pilots blasted the gentle, bucolic image of the United States as a big-hearted leader, the guide, philosopher and friend of the "free world" vis-à-vis the "world of evil." Anyone who formerly had doubts about imperialism being synonymous with war now knows that. Today wars—"local," "low intensive" and "regional conflicts"—are being fought. More and more people are perishing in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

U.S. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger pointing to where the U.S. bombs fell in Libya.

AP-TASS photo

WHAT THEY'RE PAID FOR

"Savimbi's men always avoid direct contact with us," says Captain Kangila, commander of an Angolan army unit in the district of Lumbala Caquengue in Angola's Moxico Province. "Their tactic is to attack some small village, massacre the inhabitants and make a quick getaway."

At the present time the captain and his men are busy clearing the banks of the Zambezi River of mines planted by UNITA bands. Several local peasants have been killed and others wounded by these mines. For instance, Duarte Cahumba, aged 35, stepped off his boat onto a mine and lost his right leg. Another mine tore off the left hand of his fellow villager Gaspar Joao and blinded him.

And here is what 12-year-old Amelia Francisco, who is now in hospital with an ugly leg wound, tells of an UNITA raid on Camabatela Village in North Kwanze Province. "They broke into the house and took all the clothes and dishes and the radio set. They killed my brothers and shot me in the leg. I crawled away and hid in a cattle barn." Altogether 107 villagers were killed and 42 wounded—women, children and old people.

Savimbi, the head of the UNITA cutthroats, earlier received $30 million in aid from the U.S. Now, after his visit to Washington, where he was given a positively royal reception, he is to get another $15 million. Detachments of terrorists operating from South African territory are being supplied with money and arms to sow death and destruction in Angola. Before long they, like the Afghan counterrevolutionaries, will be getting American-made Stinger missiles as well.

"There can no longer be any doubt that the so-called UNITA is nothing but a gang of criminals carrying out the designs of Washington and Pretoria," the Jornal de Angola writes.

V. MIRNY
APN correspondent, exclusive for New Times
Luanda

WHEN THE LIBERATORS COME

Scattered groups of battle-scarred CIA mercenaries that have penetrated Nicaragua from Honduras roam the mountain paths and forests of Rio Blanco in the Matagalpa Department. They avoid clashes with armed detachments, but run amok in small isolated villages and hamlets inhabited as a rule by unarmed peasants.

Antonio Rios and his wife lived in a little house near El Tortuguero. A band of contras raided the place and proceeded to seize their cow. When the old couple pleaded with them not to deprive them of their only source of livelihood, without which they would die of starvation, the contras beat them, tied them up and murdered them before the eyes of their horrified daughter-in-law Isabel Samoran. After which they raped her.

These "freedom-fighters," whom the White House has taken under its wing, stop at

South Korean capital. At U.S. bidding, a veritable war is being waged against his own people. The police are working around the clock, being dispatched from one city to another where the people are demanding free elections and withdrawal of American troops.

The anti-government protests have been going on for several months with hundreds of thousands of people taking part. Those who openly voice "treasonous sentiment" are imprisoned and tortured.

What awaited the South Korean ruler in the West European capitals? It turns out that Western politicians, who never tire of talking about human rights, suddenly showed themselves to be unusually kind and hospitable hosts. They received the dictator as a "very special visitor" (as the British Guardian phrased it). To begin with, he was relieved of the need to answer embarrassing questions. No one in any of the four capitals so much as mentioned the violation of human rights or police repressions in South Korea. As for the demonstrations in protest against the visit, the authorities considered them entirely out of place. After all, should the guest not be allowed to rest from the kind of unpleasant spectacles of which he has had more than enough at home?

L. MIKHAILOV

NEOGLOBALISM THOUT THE MASK

ploits performed by the "liberators" on orders from the White House. And President Reagan insists that the United States has a moral obligation to appropriate another $100 million for the contras.

V. DOLGOV
Our Own Correspondent
Managua

ADOPT A CONTRA!

Poor Contra goes to bed hungry every night.
CONTRA ALSO HAS NO BULLETS FO
HIS GUN, NO ROCKETS, NO GRE
AND NO FUN AT ALL.
BUT WITH YOUR HELP THERE IS
FOR JUST 100 MILLION BUCKS
ADOPT A CONTRA OF YOUR VE
AND REMEMBER, YOU'LL N
BE NOURISHING A FRAIL
BODY — YOU'LL B
OVERTHROW
GOVERN
WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMAN & ASK HOW YOU CAN A

"Poor contra goes to bed hungry every night. He has no bullets for his gun, no rockets, no grenades. And no fun at all. But with your help there is hope. For just a 100 million bucks you can adopt a contra of your very own. And remember you'll not only be nourishing a frail little body—you'll be overthrowing a government.

"Write to your Congressman and ask how you can adopt a contra."

This is the Japan Times response to the White House campaign to get more appropriations for the contras.

AGAINST SPIES AND CONGRESSMEN

Spies and Congressmen make strange bedfellows. Yet a recent AP Washington dispatch observed that in its campaign against espionage and Congressmen opposed to excessive defence spending the Pentagon was increasingly tending to classify armaments programmes.

It is hard to say whether the Pentagon can escape being spied on. The spymania in the U.S. corridors of power and the clever "leakages" organized by the military fail to provide an exact picture. However, for pulling the wool over Congressmen's eyes, the Pentagon scores top marks. The classifying of what the Pentagon does and what it plans to do prevents lawmakers from properly debating where taxpayers' money goes in the armed forces.

The National Journal provides some curious figures. In the 1981 fiscal year, of the $158 billion assigned for overall defence spending, $46 billion was for classified items that Congressmen were not privileged to know about. In the years that followed, both the nominal size of such "black programmes" and their proportion to overall federal military spending grew. The process continues.

These "black programmes," judging by "leakages" accessible to any spy who reads newspapers, concern a flying missile, the Grass-Blade helicopter (both invisible to radar), soundless submarine engines, and anti-missile missiles.

For Congressmen, at any rate, all these wonder weapons are indeed soundless and invisible. Only recently a group of Representatives complained of the rapid escalation of U.S. Air Force "black programmes." Meanwhile Congressman Mike Synar, who had managed to learn something about the Stealth bomber programme, was, he said, "shocked" by the figures, which, however, he did not dare to cite.

What cannot be gleaned from official sources, however, is available to spies real or imaginary from the non-classified material published after allocations for the Stealth bomber programme were sanctioned. The Pentagon, we learn, intends to have 132 such bombers built at a cost of between $500 million and $600 million each—in short, a total of $80 billion out of the taxpayer's pocket. Specialists believe this "black programme" will produce the costliest weapons in armaments history.

One can easily understand what motivates the Pentagon to conceal an increasingly significant proportion of its projects behind these "black programmes" when asking Congress for more money. If it were to lift even a corner of the veil, Representative Synar would not be the only person to be shocked.

B. BORISOV

SOLIDARITY IN STRUGGLE

May Day... In the hundred years since it first asserted itself in working-class Chicago it has spread to all corners of the globe, inspiring fear and hatred in some, the minority, and courage and awareness of their strength in others, the masses. As can be seen from the contributions below, the struggle takes different courses in different countries. But in all capitalist countries, as was noted in the political report of the Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the whole arsenal of means at capitalism's disposal is being put to use in a massive and fierce offensive of the monopolies against the rights of the working people. The trade unions are persecuted and economically blackmailed; anti-labour laws are enacted, progressives are hounded. People are subjected to total surveillance. The onslaught can be countered only by joint action by the working people. This is the message also of May Day 1986.

U.S.A.

HAYMARKET IS NOT FORGOTTEN

A sturdily built city that seems to cling to the ground to withstand the fierce gusts of wind that blow from Lake Michigan. This is one's first impression of Chicago, the second biggest economic centre in the United States. The skyscrapers of the small downtown business area are in dramatic contrast with the rest of the city. It is where the two sections meet that events which shook the continent took place one hundred years ago.

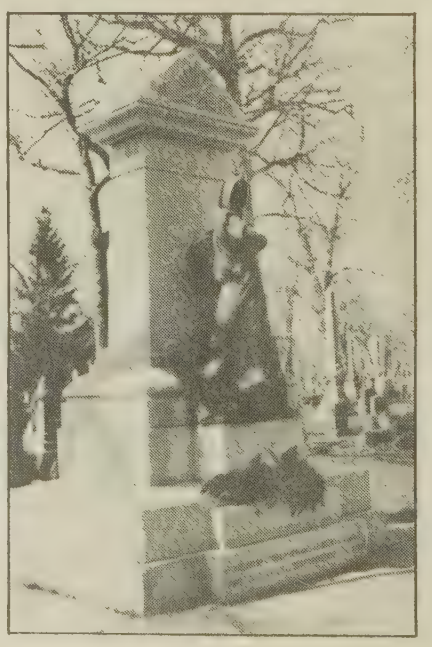
On those days in May striking industrial workers and shop assistants staged a demonstration to protest against exploitation and demand an eight-hour working day. The high point was a meeting in Haymarket Square on May 4. An agent-provocateur exploded a bomb there, killing several policemen and workers. The police did not even look for him. Reprisals were taken against the working people. The leaders of the demonstration were arrested and tried and four of them were hanged.

The events in Haymarket Square marked a new stage in the political awakening of the U.S. working class, as was evidenced by subsequent demonstrations and meetings in solidarity with the victims of the Chicago slaughter. The Paris congress of the Second International in July 1889 declared May 1 a day of international working-class solidarity.

Feeling very much in tune with the spirit of those distant days, Moscow News correspondent Vilius Kavaliauskas and I roamed the Chicago streets together with our guide, John Jakubka, a septuagenarian veteran of the working-class movement who had been directly involved in class struggle. He told us that the city fathers wanted to preserve the memory of those who had meted out punishment to the workers. But the monument to a policeman erected in Haymarket had to be moved to the police station as the citizens of Chicago made no effort to conceal their attitude to it.

John Jakubka took us to Forest Park, 12 miles from Chicago. In the cemetery there, the leaders of the May 1886 demonstration, executed after a sham twelve-month-long trial, are buried. The authorities clearly failed in their objective—to teach the workers a lesson. Chicago's working people donated the money for the memorial that now stands over the graves of the executed workers, the real heroes of the events of a century ago. Nor were Chicago working people intimidated later, though they stopped police bullets during the garment workers' strike in 1911 and the steelworkers' action in the twenties.

The monument in Forest Park.
Photo by author



John Jakubka was born in Connecticut. During the Great Depression of the thirties he had to look for work abroad. He knows what it is to work on a plantation or at a small plant in Brazil or Uruguay. He also knows only too well how it feels to be out in the streets when gendarmes have orders to open fire without warning at those who hoist red flags on May Day. He was jailed more than once for organizing May Day rallies.

"After I returned to Chicago in 1947 I took part in the last legal May Day rally at the intersection of Halsted Street and Washington Boulevard," John said. "The following year saw the beginning of the McCarthy era and the workers were deprived of the possibility of holding rallies and marches for a decade. They were allowed to meet only indoors, with thugs standing at the entrance. A click of the camera and the police had your picture."

The workers' movement sustained heavy losses during that period, but Big Business did not succeed in suppressing it altogether. Today, too, the authorities are doing all they can to break the workers' will to fight for their rights.

On September 17, 1985, the management of Exeter Drilling made the workers start drilling in Gilette, Wyoming, long before daybreak although they knew that use of electric light entailed the risk of gases catching fire. This is exactly what happened. John Nelson was killed and four other workers seriously injured. The explanation the company supplied is a study in cynicism: waiting for sunrise would have meant a loss of $6,000.

The drive for profits takes its tragic toll: in the period from 1983 to 1984 the number of industrial accidents in the U.S. increased by 21 per cent, with 5.3 million workers sustaining injuries. In the slump of the early eighties companies slashed expenditure on labour protection, and the Reagan Administration gives no thought to it at all, as has

been admitted by Wall Street Journal, the organ of Big Business.

Such tried and tested methods of fighting organized labour as dismissals and closures are widely resorted to today. The number of jobless comes to 7.2 per cent of the work force. Skilled workers are made to accept lower wages, while the younger people are paid at reduced rates. The worst hit are usually militant unionists and members of trade union associations. An analysis of the work of 500-odd companies carried out this year has shown that in the three years—from 1982 to 1985—59 per cent of them closed down, or laid off the workers at least at one of their plants. An offensive against working people's rights was launched in 41 states simultaneously, with neither industrial nor financial establishments spared. "While job loss has always been a by-product of new technology," the conservative Conference Board research organization points out, "however, worker dislocation appears to be occurring at a faster pace today and having an impact on a greater number of industries."

Peace. Work. May Day. These concepts have come to be regarded as a single whole by the world's working people. In Chicago, each of them has its historical roots. At the Peace Museum, which is currently celebrating its fifth anniversary, we talked to its founder and director, Mark Rogovin.

"The problems of peace are of primary importance," he said, "and the arts can win over increasing numbers of people to the peace campaign. There used to be tense, indeed extremely tense, periods, but today we have a truly critical situation. I would like to live to see the day when our museum survives only as a reminder of the wars and suffering of the past."

Among the exhibits are fragments of the peace band that U.S. peace fighters put around the Pentagon last August, on the eve of the 40th anniversary of the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There is a new exhibition, devoted to the centenary of the Haymarket events, in which artists extoll the dignity of the workingman and show the inseverable link between work and peace.

We also interviewed Len Ackland, editor of Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

"We think it necessary to keep the public aware of the danger of nuclear war," he told us.

Answering our question of what he considered the main area of his work, he said:

"There is always hope for a better future but the situation today does not warrant any relaxation of effort. Forty years ago there were two or three atomic bombs, while today there are 50,000-60,000 of them. Most of these belong to our two countries. One of the tasks of our journal is to bring home to everyone that regardless of the policies pursued by governments the common aim of all people is to survive and preserve this fragile planet we live on."

Tear-gas bombs thrown by well-trained policemen went off in the strikers' midst. Pressed against the railing and gasping for breath, they were compelled to fight back. This was what the policemen with handcuffs ready were waiting for. People were being detained, ostensibly for resisting the authorities, actually for their unwillingness to give in to the employers. This happened at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota, a few days after I returned from Chicago. Putting strikers behind bars is normal practice. Today more than two hundred political prisoners are kept in American jails for taking part in anti-imperialist and anti-nuclear campaigns and upholding minority rights. But the struggle continues. On May Day John Jakubka and his comrades will assemble at the intersection of Chicago's Halsted and 18th streets to demonstrate their solidarity with their fellow workers all over the world.

Our Own Correspondent
Chicago-New York

F.R.G.

FOR THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

"Opinion polls will be conducted at our factory tomorrow," Alfred Mateika, member of the Glyco works council, said. "They will start at 5 a.m. and go on till noon. All three shifts will be able to take part."

I was interviewing Mateika at his home. We were crowded into a small kitchen. In addition to the host, there were four other workers from the Glyco works in Wiesbaden: Dagmar Hoffmann, Roland Emmel, Michael Gebert, and Klemens Schütters, who is a representative of the metalworkers' union in Wiesbaden. The opinion polls were being conducted throughout the country on the decision of the Federation of German Trade Unions. The purpose was to establish the view of working people on a bill amending Article 116 of the Labour Law. The bulletins distributed among those to be polled read: "I want the trade unions to retain the right to strike. Therefore I reject the amended wording of Article 116 of the Labour Law approved by the Bundestag."

I asked the workers: "But government spokesmen say the amendment does not affect the right to strike. Why are the trade unions against the bill?"

Alfred Mateika replied: "Because the bill turns the right to strike into a mere formality. By amending Article 116, the government and the manufacturers' associations are eager to prevent a repetition of the events of 1984, when we managed to get the administration to grant our demands in part."

At the time, to prevent a further rise in unemployment, the metalworkers' union proposed that the working week should be reduced to 35 hours without wage cuts. Prolonged talks proved futile. The employers flatly refused to meet the demand. The trade union declared a strike. Resorting to such an extreme measure, the union had to give thought to the provision of material support for the strikers. But its funds were limited. That was why the strike was declared only in two regions, namely Hesse and Nordwürttemberg/Nordbaden. Fifty-seven thousand workers from several factories took part in it. The owners responded with lockouts, dismissing another 150,000. The union was compelled to support them too.

At the same time, on the pretext of being short of parts, the employers started to halt production at big motor vehicle works in other parts of the country. About 300,000 more workers lost their jobs. Heinrich Franke, head of the Federal Labour Office, issued an order forbidding payment of benefits to them from the unemployment insurance fund. The purpose was to force the union to end the strike, because it could not support all the dismissed workers. The union appealed to several courts which annulled the decision on the basis of Article 116 of the Labour Law.

The strike lasted seven weeks. Ultimately the employers had to make certain concessions. But now the law is being amended to deprive workers dismissed during a strike of the right to unemployment benefits. The employers are now in a position quickly to strangle any strike by resorting to lockouts.

The workers at the Glyco plant, which

manufactures motor vehicle parts, are quite familiar with lockouts. When the fight for the 35-hour working week started in the spring of 1984 they found themselves out of work. It was clear from the outset that in the event of a labour conflict the workers at the Glyco plant would be in the forefront of the class struggle either as strikers or as victims of a lockout. The trade union prepared them for the fight, setting forth its aims and purpose.

But employers did not lose time either. Combining threats with persuasion, they pursued their line, trying to break down the workers' will to resist. Every employee at the Glyco works received a letter from the administration which claimed that if the union demands were met unemployment, far from dropping, would soar, and that the introduction of a 35-hour working week without a wage cut would sap the plant's competitive capacity.

The situation in the country was growing increasingly tense. The government outspokenly sided with the employers. The Federation of German Trade Unions responded with a rally of mass solidarity with the metalworkers. All seventeen branch unions took part in the rally. It was attended by Glyco workers too.

My interviewees told me that there had never been anything like it in the history of the Federation: two hundred and fifty thousand people, including strikers and dismissed workers, marched through the streets of Bonn to Hofgartenplatz.

The employers' association of the metalworking industry in Hesse retaliated with lockouts at 16 plants, the Glyco works among them. The companies notified the workers that during the lockout they would not be paid their wages and that the premises were out of bounds to them. At the same time they hypocritically urged the workers they had left without any means of subsistence "to observe law and order and display good sense."

The Glyco workers were faced with the question of what to do next. Heed the employers' advice and "sensibly" wait at home for the factory gates to open? But that was tantamount to surrender in the face of arbitrary action taken in defiance of the constitution of Hesse which bans lockouts. It was not a question of daily bread or the length of the working week alone. It was a question of defending democracy.

On the following day the workers came to the factory. A spontaneous meeting was held. The speakers condemned the employers for their actions, deplored the violation of the constitution and pointed out that the lockout had blasted their illusions about "social partnership."

This marked the beginning of a long and hard struggle which was led by a strike committee. Every morning the workers would assemble at the factory gates demanding that they be admitted to their machines.

Once a worker noticed the lens of a videocamera in a window of the administration building. When the strike committee filed a protest the managers first pretended to be wholly ignorant of the secret filming. Then they said they needed "proof" if forces independent both of the administration and of the strike committee should appear. In fact they wanted to identify the most active fighters.

The lockout lasted five weeks. It ended when it became known that the metalworkers' union had reached a compromise with the employers' association. The strike committee issued its last leaflet entitled "We Shall Not Forget!" It read: "We shall not forget how we were driven out of the factory gates like dogs, we shall not forget the videocamera which was used to watch us like dangerous criminals."

Nearly two years have passed since the lockout. The workers I interviewed told me that the experience they had acquired was useful in their present fight. The workers realized that they could not persuade the employers with arguments alone, however convincing. The fight for a shorter working week produced results, though on a modest scale. If the bill amending Article 116 comes into force the working people will be deprived of their main weapon—the right to strike. Glyco workers are well aware of this. In February they readily took part in a nationwide preventive strike called by the Federation of German Trade Unions. On March 6 they held a demonstration together with workers from other plants.

"We harbour no illusions," Klemens Schütters said in conclusion. "The Bundesrat—the upper chamber of our parliament—where the CDU/CSU have a majority, will most likely approve the bill, even if the trade unions secure millions of votes against it. But this does not mean that our fight is futile. The trade unions have won over millions of workers who were standing aloof."

And indeed, during the recent poll, 7.6 million workers—95.6 per cent of the total polled—rejected the new bill. However, Minister of Labour Nobert Blüm simply refused to accept from the Federation of German Trade Unions the

What the amended Article 116 of the Labour Law will mean for the workers, as the Unsere Zeit (F.R.G.) cartoonist sees it.

document recording the results of the opinion poll. On April 18 the Bundesrat too adopted the amended Article 116 of the Labour Law. This was the Bonn government's May Day present to the country's working people.

A. TOLPEGIN
Our Own Correspondent

Wiesbaden-Bonn

JAPAN

ONSLAUGHT OF CAPITAL

The Japanese workers' spring offensives are well known far beyond the boundaries of the country. Ever since 1955 Japan has been swept every year from February to May by waves of strikes, meetings and mass demonstrations demanding wage increases and better working and living conditions, and protesting against the reactionary policy of the ruling quarters. The peak years in these actions of the working people were the early 1970s; 1974 witnessed an unprecedented nationwide three-day strike in which more than six million took part. Subsequent years, however, have seen a notable ebb in the spring offensive tide. It is a long time since the Japanese working class

has used its most effective weapon—the nationwide strike. Strike actions have been on a small scale. And statistics show a drop in the number of organized workers.

Why is it that in a country where this unique and effective form of the workers' struggle for their rights originated the tendency now is for a "strikeless spring offensive"?

At the time of economic upswing in the 1960s and 1970s the Japanese working people won certain gains, forcing the employers to give up part of their superprofits in face of the threat of bigger losses owing to strike actions. Now the situation has changed. Studies conducted by the trade unions reveal that the Japanese working class is experiencing serious material difficulties. On the pretext of "rationalization of the economy" and a "strict austerity regime" being necessary, Big Business is pursuing a tough line in its economic policy. The result has been the so-called "administrative and financial reform," which was drafted by leading representatives of Big Business in the beginning of the 1980s.

This reform, which the government has already begun to carry out, is bound to have far-reaching social consequences. It pursues three basic aims: sharp reduction of budget expenditures, limitation of the state sector of the economy, and the reduction and reorganization of the administrative machinery. State subsidies for social security, agriculture and public works are to be cut. This will increase the cost to the population of medical services, social security and education, place a large part of the farm population in a difficult position, and slow down the development of backward regions.

The state monopoly on the sale of tobacco and salt and the telegraph and telephone corporation have been handed over to the private sector. The government has in effect begun to break up the huge state railway corporation into six separate companies, which are also to be privatized. As a result, 100,000 railwaymen will lose their jobs. Unemployment is perhaps one of the most serious consequences of denationalization. According to official figures, 1.7 million workers—2.7 per cent of the total labour force—cannot find work. Trade union statistics place the unemployment figure at more than four million, and the number is growing as a result of the structural recasting of the economy. In these circumstances fear of being left without work discourages many workers from joining in mass actions.

The position of the working class is also affected by the ingenious devices used by the employers as regards hiring policy and wages. The system of lifetime employment practised by some firms ensures the worker a steady job until retirement age, and the fact that wages are made dependent primarily on length of service and "loyalty to the firm" ties the employee to the firm. In return, the worker is required to display devotion to the company and above all to refrain from strike action. This practice is complemented with ideological and psychological indoctrination of the working people in the spirit of "partnership" of labour and capital and "unity and exclusiveness" of the Japanese nation. All this leads to many workers placing their standing with the employers above everything else and avoiding any involvement in acute forms of the class struggle.

Spring offensive 1986. These Tokyo demonstrators demand that the government stop slashing social programmes, preserve state subsidies for medical services, education and relief for the needy.

TASS photo

A large part of the Japanese working people are temporary or part-time workers. Among this most ruthlessly exploited section of the working class are many women. Besides compelling them to work to the point of exhaustion, the employer can at any moment cancel their contracts and pay them much less. Many of the social benefits the permanent workers have won do not extend to this category.

Japanese state-monopoly capitalism has also another powerful instrument for disuniting the working class. In the sea of Japanese economy there are besides the ocean liners—the big concerns with a worldwide reputation which are comparatively few in number—a multitude of smaller craft—the medium-sized and small subcontractor firms. In the event of storms—economic crises—many of the latter go down and their workers augment the army of the redundant. Employees of small firms are not organized and are hence more passive than the others.

The ruling quarters' policy of splitting the working-class movement has created no few difficulties for the trade unions. Here is an example. In November last year the Union of State Railway Workers in Chiba Prefecture organized a 24-hour strike in protest against the privatization of the railways. A leftist group chose this time to stage a series of sabotage acts on the railways in the Tokyo area which seriously disrupted rail traffic. The leftist action was promptly seized upon by the authorities as a pretext for harsh repressive measures against the unions.

The choice of target was not accidental. Railway workers are classified as government employees and their unions are the most militant and consistent defenders of the vital rights of the working people. Government employees account for about two thirds of the 4.5 million members of the leading trade union centre SOHYO. Thus, both denationalization and repressive measures are instruments used by the capitalists against an influential trade union federation.

Another thing to be borne in mind is that every enterprise in Japan has its own trade union. This has greatly increased the number of unions (there now are more than 72,000), a considerable part of which are not strong enough to fight the employers. Besides, they account for less than one third of the labour force.

Will the Japanese trade unions be able to withstand the fierce onslaught of capital and preserve their unity? The militant traditions of the Japanese working class are strong. The decisive battles are still ahead.

V. VOLODIN

"STAR WARS," EUROPEAN VARIANT

DMITRY POGORZHELSKY

For three years now SDI — President Reagan's notorious military-political concept which from the start was aptly described as the "star wars" programme — has been the subject of heated debates, even among the United States' West European allies whom Washington has set out to involve in the project. About a year ago when discussion of whether to take part in it or not was at its height another idea cropped up, at first in vague terms but now already with the quite definite designation of European Defence Initiative or EDI. What exactly is it?

Washington Manoeuvre

Western Europe's initial reaction to the "star wars" plan was by and large negative. It was felt that it could only upset strategic stability worldwide and sharply increase the risk of a nuclear conflict. This was a perfectly natural reaction prompted by common sense.

Even diehard devotees of U.S. strategy feared that if SDI were realized there would be two levels of security — one for the United States under cover of its space "shield" and the other for Western Europe, which, being outside that "shield," would not be protected against a possible retaliatory strike. For the space umbrella as conceived by the U.S. could offer protection (questionable, at that) only from a retaliatory strike by intercontinental ballistic missiles. It would be powerless against other types of nuclear weapon carriers — aircraft, medium-range, cruise and tactical missiles.

Washington continued to boost the project, inviting its allies to take part in it. Some of them refused outright, others were slow to give an answer. To reassure the recalcitrant allies, the U.S. military announced last summer that they would take "a closer look at Europe's missile problems." And in the autumn General James Abrahamson, director of the SDI organization, speaking at the Pentagon, said that "alternative variants" were being considered in the U.S. Among other things, he mentioned a project for a land-based system for the defence of the "theatre of hostilities" (as the U.S. terms the European continent). In early February this year the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William Crow, said that means of countering short-range ballistic missiles were being studied within the SDI framework in deference to the wishes of the European members of NATO.

In other words, a military-political manoeuvre was devised to ensure the fullest participation of the West European countries in the "star wars" plan. Moreover, Washington preferred to have the idea emanate not from the U.S. but from some West European ally, as had been the case time and again before. Recall if only the fact that some 10 years ago the then F.R.G. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was the first to talk about the "new threat to Western Europe" allegedly presented by the Soviet medium-range missiles. Washington used this as a pretext for deploying its new first-strike nuclear missiles on the continent.

This time the U.S. did not have to cast about long for an executor of its stratagem. There was no better choice than Bonn.

The Wörner Proposal...

The idea of a "European defence initiative" was first advanced in the F.R.G. last summer. It was seized upon by Alfred Dregger, Franz Josef Strauss and other right-wing CDU/CSU politicians. By the end of November Defence Minister Manfred Wörner already had on his desk a study prepared by Bundeswehr headquarters proposing the creation of a new air defence system impenetrable by aircraft and cruise, tactical and medium-range missiles. Wörner took the idea to a NATO Council session in Brussels where he urged the allies to embark on the realization of EDI as a component of the American programme. The allies reacted coolly to the proposition. Not so NATO Supreme Commander in Europe General Bernard Rogers, who was enthusiastic about it.

What exactly did Wörner propose?

NATO, he said, must be able to "defend itself against short- and medium-range ballistic missiles," it must possess "the means of defence against cruise missiles and other weapons." A West European anti-missile defence system was not only urgently needed but "technologically feasible," he averred. The first stage was to be the modernization of the U.S. Patriot anti-aircraft systems deployed by NATO on the continent and the replacement of the obsolete Hawk and Roland-1 air defence missiles with new systems capable of coping with all types of missiles. A beginning had already been made — the F.R.G. had been working together with the U.S. for several years on developing such systems.

But there could be no stopping at this "relatively conservative solution to the problem," Wörner argued. The future belonged to new technologies, lasers and electromagnetic systems. The U.S., he said, would automatically have to take part in developing these systems "inasmuch as it has a large contingent of its armed forces here." The minister's logic was simple: with the growing threat of a retaliatory strike at U.S. armed forces and installations on the continent, the allies on the territory of which first-strike missiles are sited should not be mere bystanders.

Thus, Western Europe is being urged to create its own technologically up-to-date land-based ABM systems. And to do so even before SDI is realized! The overall picture, then, is this: the SDI "shield" is to provide cover from a retaliatory strike for the United States' steadily expanding strategic potential on its own territory while the planned West European anti-missile cover is to serve as an additional "shield," primarily for the U.S. nuclear-missile strength on the continent.

This is essentially a cunning device by means of which Washington is out to involve its allies in the most dangerous of its schemes, namely, to undermine the 1972 Soviet-American treaty

on the limitation of ABM systems. Direct participation in SDI would mean complicity in violating this treaty which is the recognized foundation of strategic stability. The deployment of an ABM system in Western Europe is not proscribed by treaty arrangements, a fact which is gleefully stressed also by Wörner, who underscores the European origin of this new plan for stepping up the arms race on the European continent. But what are the real origins of the "European initiative" with which Bonn is supplementing the "star wars" plan?

...and the Old Prescriptions

In the autumn of 1980 Professor David Yost of the U.S. Naval Academy toured three European countries — the F.R.G., Britain and France. Shortly after his return, he published a study in which he

wrote that the Atlantic alliance urgently needed the means of defence against tactical missiles in order to protect the new NATO medium-range missiles and also important ground installations — airfields, nuclear weapons storage facilities, command centres and control and communications systems.

It will be recalled that a year earlier the fateful decision was taken to station in Western Europe a new generation of U.S. first-strike nuclear weapons — Pershing 2 and cruise missiles. The decision evoked a storm of protest in Western Europe against the new round in the arms race sparked off by Washington. For this reason, Dr Yost, after having talked to officials in the three countries, concluded that if the U.S. wanted to create a cover for its missiles it was politically advisable not to talk about it — at any rate not before the missiles appeared on the European continent. And this, according to the Pentagon plan, was to happen — and did happen — towards the end of 1983. In the meantime the best course was to keep silent, Yost said. And he hinted that the optimal setting in this situation would be a CDU/CSU government in the Federal Republic.

In October 1982 a change in government did occur in Bonn. The conservative bloc that took over proceeded vigorously to give effect to the U.S. plans. Manfred Wörner became Minister of Defence and before 1982 was out he had before him a document dealing precisely with new weapon systems. It is noteworthy that involved in the preparation of this study was the Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm concern, one of the main contractors for the F.R.G. Defence Ministry. It was revealed that MBB, together with two other military-industrial complex giants, Siemens and Telefunken, was already working on relevant research and development programmes.

A year later a research group headed by Professor Fred Hoffman issued a report in the U.S. which for the first time openly spoke of the need to create an anti-missile belt in Europe based on the Patriot air defence systems. Meanwhile work was already under way in the U.S. on a new anti-tactical missile programme for which the President had asked for $700 million to be appropriated for the period up to 1988. In mid-1984 Bonn became the first of America's West European allies to conclude an agreement with Washington on the purchase of Patriot systems.

But this is just the beginning. The main emphasis has been placed on the development of weapons systems based on the latest technology. That is why Washington is so anxious to involve its European allies in SDI, bent on drawing on their scientific and technological potential, on laying hands on all the latest achievements in Western Europe. And in this the F.R.G. is actively helping the U.S.

Manfred Wörner is pleased: the U.S. Patriot missile system is the first step to the realization of the Bonn plan.
From the weekly Vorwärts (F.R.G.)

The Concerns Reveal Their Hand

For some time European research in this field was wrapped in secrecy. But now that EDI is talked about openly and the governments of the United States' principal allies take a favourable view of the participation of their firms in SDI, the concerns are revealing their hands.

Citing a study by the European subsidiary of the American High Frontier organization, which vigorously lobbies for SDI, the West German Der Spiegel says that the prime objects of research are a high-energy laser weapon and a rapid-fire electromagnetic gun. Several European research organizations are working on these projects. In the Federal Republic the MBB and Diehl firms have jointly produced a working model of such a laser weapon. The American Aviation Week and Space Technology directly links it with the "star wars"

programme. Another Defence Ministry contractor, the Dornier aerospace firm, has already developed for use on board shuttle ships a precision-targeting system for space-based weapons. The same firm has offered to develop a laser operating on free electrons. The American SDI strategists jumped at it. Not to be left behind, MBB has demonstrated a model of a chemical laser installation for tanks. "The F.R.G. should play the leading role in the EDI programme," Hanns-Arnt Vogels, chairman of the board of MBB, has observed.

But Bonn is not the only claimant to that role.

Readied for Military Use

When President Mitterrand of France advanced in April 1985 the Eureka plan for the coordination of research in Western Europe, Paris went out of its way to emphasize the civilian character of the project. But already then there were suspicions that a "military uniform" was being prepared for it. Now these suspicions have been reinforced.

At the end of 1985 the then French Defence Minister Paul Quilès, speaking of SDI, observed that France and other West European countries were working on similar projects.

The proposal to set up a European military research centre for Eureka came from Paris. It was made by Jean-Louis Gergorin, adviser to the president of the French war industry concern Matra, which, incidentally, is controlled by the state. And in mid-January Paris, through Quilès, gave its blessing to the participation of French firms in SDI.

When the Wörner project appeared, military cooperation between the F.R.G. and France was given a new impetus. For some time it seemed that the F.R.G., unwilling to anger its overseas patron, took a sceptical view of the Eureka project. But in time it transpired that Washington's attitude both to Eureka and the Bonn-Paris alliance was benevolent. Bonn is playing on two chess boards at once and its support of Eureka is far stronger than might appear at first glance. The F.R.G. is today becoming a bridge between Eureka and the "star wars" programme. Latterly other such bridges have been appearing.

The prospects thus opened are becoming increasingly attractive to the powerful European military-industrial complex, which sees a source of lush profits in the new technologies. This applies primarily to firms that are out to participate simultaneously in both SDI and Eureka. Siemens and MBB (F.R.G.), Thomson (France), Philips (Holland) and General Electric (Britain), for example, have formed a special consortium for the purpose. The same has been done by eight leading Italian aerospace firms.

That EDI is taking shape is evident from numerous recent developments. For instance, according to Le Figaro, research conducted at the Franco-German ballistic institute has already produced a powerful impulse laser which experts say is the most advanced in Europe. At the meeting between F.R.G. Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President François Mitterrand, Kohl proposed setting up a commission to work out a project for a "European defence system to intercept short-range missiles." In other words, the Paris-Bonn alliance is entering a new, "missile" level.

Another Objective

Washington and NATO are out to bring "star wars" down to earth in pursuance of still another objective. "Space shield technology introduces numerous revolutionary changes in the sphere of conventional armaments," the Italian Europeo journal wrote citing a secret report submitted to the government stressing the need for the most up-to-date sensors and reconnaissance, command and control systems. Konrad Seitz, head of the planning division of the F.R.G. Foreign Ministry, put it plainly when he said that technologies suitable for the "development of 'intelligent' weapons... carrier and reconnaissance systems for NATO's FOFA concept" could be worked out in the EDI framework.

FOFA, the NATO name for the doctrine of "strikes at second echelons" of the enemy, was worked out several years ago by the Pentagon and subsequently imposed on the West European allies. It provides for combined "preventive" strikes, involving the use of nuclear, conventional and chemical weapons, at targets 400-500 kilometres deep in rear areas of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

Its adoption by NATO as an official doctrine was preceded by the Rogers plan for building up the bloc's conventional armaments, which called for a 3 per cent annual increase of military spending by the members of the alliance. This conventional buildup was presented as evidence of NATO's striving to reduce dependence on nuclear weapons. Actually, however, it was nothing of the kind. Besides, how could a political problem be resolved by purely technical means?

Moreover, the new generation of weapons based on the latest technology, by virtue of its tactical and technical features, erases the dividing line between nuclear and conventional weapons and further erodes security on the European continent. Even Western experts admit that the FOFA concept greatly increases the risk of conflict and its rapid escalation. The fate of the Europeans would be in the hands of computers.

* * *

Thus, the European Defence Initiative, in the form in which it is presented today, is a complex military-technical programme aimed at gaining superiority over the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Treaty countries.

Realization of EDI, as of SDI, would lead to a new race between offensive and defensive armaments in the sphere of Eurostrategic and tactical missiles. As a result, the security of our continent would be seriously undermined. The West European countries, and primarily the F.R.G., would assume a large part of the responsibility for emasculating the ABM treaty.

West European Laocoon.
Drawing from Europäische Wehrkunde (F.R.G.)

Evidently the time to start giving wide publicity to EDI has been deliberately chosen. Just when some positive signs of progress have appeared at the Stockholm and Vienna talks, and when the U.S.S.R. is exerting every effort to cut the Gordian knot of disarmament, Western Europe is being dragged into a new round of the arms race that would make it extremely difficult to reach agreement on the full range of questions re-

lating to arms control. The label "European" does not save Wörner's scheme. The world has seen many such plans—recall the European Army, the European Defence Community and other attempts to push through, under arresting names, dangerous plans which essentially conflict with the interests of the European countries.

The fact that Bonn is sponsoring the latest militarist project is a cause for serious concern, considering that there is persistent talk in the corridors of power on the Rhine of the German question still being open and revanchist designs are still being harboured there.

Lastly, the new design undermines the principles the leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the United States declared for in Geneva where both sides spoke of the need to renounce the striving for military superiority, and to prevent the outbreak of war, nuclear or conventional. The EDI plan clearly runs counter to these objectives.

The talk about the new "initiative" being aimed at strengthening security on the continent does not hold water for the simple reason that its underlying principle of "arms against arms" is fallacious. To adhere to this dogma in our day means only to aggravate the situation, to heighten the risk of conflict. **"The character of present-day weaponry leaves no country with any hope of safeguarding itself solely with military and technical means, for example, by building up a defence, even the most powerful,"** the political report of the Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the CPSU emphasizes. Today security can be ensured only by political means.

The Soviet Union is ready to do this. Mikhail Gorbachev's January 15 statement set forth a clear-cut and concrete plan for the stage-by-stage creation of a nuclear-free world. It provides among other things for the elimination of both medium-range and tactical missiles. The U.S.S.R. is ready also to negotiate a radical reduction of conventional armaments. This is a truly European initiative. Only in this way, and not by a headlong drive for new types of armaments, can the security of our continent be ensured.

■

U.S.S.R.—SWEDEN

LIKE GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson of Sweden was in Moscow on an official visit from April 14 to 17 at the Soviet government's invitation. He met with General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev and Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov.

During the meetings and talks it was pointed out with satisfaction that the U.S.S.R. and Sweden take similar stands on such important issues as the elimination of nuclear weapons, ending nuclear tests, preventing the spread of weapons to outer space, equal international cooperation, the right of a given country to choose its own path of social development and enjoy complete independence, and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs.

Mikhail Gorbachev expressed his unequivocal respect for Sweden's traditional policy of neutrality. The Soviet Union thinks highly of Sweden's active position, and the initiatives it proposes, both on its own and in conjunction with the other states of the Delhi Six, as well as with the neutral and non-aligned countries, to safeguard peace and curb the arms race. This also applies fully to the initiative for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the north and central part of our continent. On behalf of the Swedish government, Ingvar Carlsson praised the Soviet programme to deliver the planet from nuclear weapons.

Naturally, bilateral relations were also discussed during the Moscow negotiations. Moscow and Stockholm believe that favourable preconditions exist for the promotion of Soviet-Swedish cooperation in the economic sphere and in international affairs. The decisions adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress have opened up new prospects for cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.

Below, TASS and New Times correspondents examine the way these prospects are being assessed in Sweden.

It was with keen interest that Sweden followed the deliberations of the 27th CPSU Congress which outlined a course to promote international cooperation in all spheres and set our nation the ambitious task of speeding up socio-economic progress on the basis of advanced technology. Sweden's specialization in this field, the two countries' close proximity to each other and the long history of Soviet-Swedish cooperation provide the groundwork for the expansion and further consolidation of trade links.

It was no coincidence that in both the Soviet trade mission in Stockholm and the Swedish companies which we visited the outlook for our economic and technical cooperation was unanimously described as bright. Writing in the Svenska Dagbladet on the eve of Ingvar Carlsson's visit to Moscow, Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Carl-Johan Åberg stressed that the guidelines for economic and social development of the U.S.S.R. adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress offered Swedish industry new opportunities on the Soviet market and that his country was interested in the deepening and broadening of business cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Sweden was one of the first Western countries with which the young Soviet republic signed trade agreements (in May 1918). The 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and Sweden and of the first trade treaty between the two countries was celebrated in March 1984. The foundation our business relations are based upon has been immeasurably strengthened in these 60 years.

The past few years have brought many important developments in this field. A long-term trade agreement was signed during Prime Minister Olof Palme's official visit in 1976. The year 1981 saw the signing of the long-term programme of economic, industrial, scientific and technical cooperation for the period up to 1990. The intergovernmental agreement on coastal trade, signed in February 1985, has already led to a marked growth in trade between Sweden, on the one hand, and Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Leningrad Region, on the other. Coastal trade, to which great importance is attached here, is characterized by a minimum of formalities in business transactions, an emphasis on consumer goods, and the participation of small and medium-sized firms. Of no less importance to the Swedish side is the agreement reached in May 1985 to credit a certain proportion of Swedish exports in machines and equipment to the U.S.S.R. in the increasingly popular European currency unit based on the

currency exchange rates of 10 Common Market countries. This is the first agreement of its kind to have been reached between the U.S.S.R. and a capitalist country. The agreements signed of late include contracts for deliveries of equipment to the Balakhna pulp and paper mill, the Norilsk ore-dressing mill, and the world's largest dairy factory now under construction in Lianozovo (Moscow).

Great interest is being shown here in the extensive programme for the modernization of the Soviet mechanical engineering industry and the further development of the power industry—fields in which Sweden has attained a high standard of specialization. A look into the Sandvik AB company may explain why Swedish businessmen are interested in promoting international cooperation.

The company has its headquarters, research centre, laboratories and pilot plants in Sandviken, 200 km north of Stockholm. Established in 1862, some years later the company led the Swedish metallurgical industry. However, it was able to increase production only by expanding into foreign markets. Sandvik has adhered to this policy since its foundation. Today the company has 12 factories in Sweden and 98 production and trading subsidiaries in over 40 countries. More than 80 per cent of Sandvik's output is marketed outside Sweden.

As ever, Sandvik continues to retain its narrow specialization in order to maintain its lead. Its main products, invariably of high quality, include hard alloys and their products (the company is the world's biggest producer of these), special steels for the manufacture of pipes, wires, strips and cutting tools.

Sandvik is one of the three Swedish companies that maintain extensive and steady business relations with Soviet organizations. The five-year (1981-85) cooperation programme which provided for the design and delivery of complete industrial plant to the U.S.S.R. and the feasibility study involved has just been completed. Among the business partners of Swedish companies are the Atomic Engineering Works, the Volga Automobile Plant and the Urals Heavy Engineering Works.

In an interview with us, Sandvik president Per-Olof Ericsson stressed:

"We have excellent opportunities for doing more business because our two countries' requirements complement each other. We are expanding our presence in Moscow [Sandvik opened an office in the Soviet capital in 1976] and putting a great deal of effort into this. There is no doubt that we can conduct at least a certain proportion of our trade on a balanced basis."

Sunds Defibrator AB, one of the world's leading producers of equipment for the pulp and paper industry, and Alfa-Laval AB, which specializes in food and dairy industry automation and the storage and processing of farm products, hold a prominent part in Sweden's trade with the U.S.S.R. Many firms are showing interest in projects to develop the oil and gas deposits on the Kara and Barents Sea shelves and the deposits on the Kola Peninsula. Such projects open up prospects of long-term cooperation on the mutually profitable compensation basis.

We cannot fail to mention here a circumstance of transatlantic rather than local provenance. The trade war the U.S. has started on the pretext of combating protectionism has been widely commented on for weeks now in Western Europe. Washington has openly voiced its displeasure at West European trade and economic policies in a number of fields. In a special letter to the Foreign Trade Minister, the United States has demanded that Sweden should "voluntarily restrict" its steel sales. The object of this move is to clear the way for American exports by threatening to impose quotas and raise tariff barriers.

Washington is also attempting to interfere with the development of East-West trade, in high technology especially. The prohibitive lists of the Coordinating Committee for control of strategic exports to communist countries (COCOM) are common knowledge. The U.S. is now trying to extend them. The Swedish government's decision to "ban the export from Sweden of certain commodities" under the manufacturing country's export control is a result of this pressure. True, Swedish officials say the new decision will not affect trade relations with the U.S.S.R. But Washington is unlikely to leave it at that.

The Soviet Union wishes its relations with Sweden to be free of any expediency and this was reaffirmed during Ingvar Carlsson's visit. As for any problems that may arise, the two sides will discuss and deal with them directly and openly, as good neighbours should.

Y. GUDKOV
New Times Special Correspondent
N. VUKOLOV
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Stockholm

According to the Hijra lunar calendar, in Afghanistan today the year is 1365—the 14th century.

Only eight years ago it seemed that most of the population were indeed living in the 14th century according to the Gregorian calendar. The country was still in the Middle Ages. Poverty, illiteracy and epidemics were rife and there was blind obedience to the precepts of Sharia.

The April 1978 revolution sent strong tremors through that stagnation. The first decrees issued by the republic, those on land reform, the equality of nations and nationalities, equality between men and women and the eradication of illiteracy, shook the very foundations of old traditions and morals. These decrees are now being steadily, if slowly, implemented.

By giving peasants land and water, building factories, power stations, houses, schools and hospitals, and opening more courses to eradicate illiteracy, the people's democratic government is strengthening and expanding the social base of the revolution.

The process has gained momentum over the past year. Respected figures from various strata of the population were elected to the local government bodies in many provinces, and tribal chiefs, businessmen, clergymen, peasants and artisans were coopted into the supreme bodies of state authority.

The expansion of the social base of the revolution is unquestionably one of the most distinctive features of life in Afghanistan today, when the republic is celebrating the eighth anniversary of the epoch-making events of April 1978.

A Herat Shopkeeper

At first sight shopkeeper Zikria Yahya could hardly be taken for a staunch supporter of the revolution. A trader and proprietor, he obviously stands apart from the mass of the population. His business, moreover, is special: another trader may have on display a dozen watermelons, a couple of crates of grapes or persimmon, and a sack of parsley and dill, in short, high-risk seasonal goods, which perish unless sold quickly. But Yahya's wares are always in demand regardless of the season: they are clocks and watches, found in every Afghan home and worn by every adult Afghan. Wrist watches are a status symbol in the country.

Zikria Yahya also has a flat, which takes up the whole floor above his shop. He drives a Volkswagen and his seven children do not hunt for odd jobs all over the city, but go to school well fed, shod and clad.

April 27 marked the eighth anniversary of Afghanistan's April Revolution

THEY ARE DEFENDING THE REVOLUTION

GHERMAN USTINOV

The revolution has nothing against such people as Yahya—but there seems no special reason to count on them as true friends.

However, Herat municipal agencies have trust in the man. The Herat leaders—the first secretary of the provincial committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and the governor of the province—often talk with him and entrust him with serious missions. Yahya, it turns out, was the first shopkeeper in Herat to join the party and was recently elected secretary of the seven-member shopkeepers' branch of the party.

When the 35-year-old shopkeeper joined the PDPA, the chiefs of underground counterrevolutionary gangs swore on the Koran to make short shrift of him. Clearly, Yahya was dangerous because he had set an example to a whole stratum of private traders, on whom the counterrevolutionaries pinned special hopes.

Yahya joined the party because he understood and approved its plans and practical measures. The party wanted, and worked for, peace and order in the country and happiness and justice for the ordinary people. And Yahya has always thought of himself as an ordinary man. He comes from the countryside and his relatives still live in a village. When the time comes to sow or harvest Yahya closes his shop and goes to the village to help his old parents. And then, his shop is a business only in name. It is a mud hut in which he repairs and sells old clocks and watches. All his profit, if we may use the term, is pay for his work. His flat has just three crammed rooms and his Volkswagen is a jalopy bought second-hand. In short, he is a shopkeeper in a poor district.

Everyone knows that busy trade is the main sign of steady life in the East. If the bazaar is buzzing and bustling, if the shops, tiny restaurants, kebab houses and tea-rooms have their doors open, life is as it should be. That is why peaceful shopkeepers are among the main targets of the counterrevolutionaries. By scaring shopkeepers and paralyzing trade, the bandits seem to demonstrate their strength and assert themselves as a force to be reckoned with.

Yahya remembers the looting and violence that have swept the Herat bazaars many times since the revolution. In 1981, for instance, a hefty guy entered his shop, calling himself a "messenger" of the counterrevolutionary Islamic Society of Afghanistan and demanded 30,000 afghanis for the society. When the shopkeeper refused to pay up (indeed, his whole shop was not worth so much), the thug took out a gun and shot Yahya several times in cold blood. The shopkeeper was laid up in hospital for three months.

"After that incident I finally realized that none of us could achieve anything single-handed. Nor could the authorities post a guard at every shop. That's why we decided to start our own self-defence units. The provincial party committee supported us and gave us weapons and I was put in charge of the units," Yahya recounted.

I was told by the head of the provincial zarandoy (people's militia) that small but close-knit units of shopkeepers were contributing a good deal to the war against banditry. Life in the market places has become calmer, cases of extortion are rarer and no looting occurs in broad daylight. Volunteer militiamen are on duty round the clock. Yahya also goes out on night duty twice a week, armed with a submachine gun. The bandits, he says, do not dare come near the militia posts. "They know that we are not scared easily and don't take bribes."

I talked to Yahya after he had done his 12 hours on duty. There were two benches, a table and an electric stove with a kettle constantly hissing steam in the small guardhouse which the militiamen had put together themselves from planks. Yahya had with him his fellow patrolmen, chandler Ibrahim Khamid, butcher Abdul Gaffar and greengrocer Suleiman Arbab. They not only guard their homes and shops but also give a hand routing bandit bases and seizing the arms caches of the counterrevolutionaries.

In the afternoon they were to have a party meeting, the next day a lecture on the position of women in socialist society, in a couple of days a cleaning-up day in the marketplace, and then another stint of night duty at the busiest crossing in the old town with its maze of dark streets and blind alleys. I listened to them in amazement: could they be the very same Afghan shopkeepers, masters of commercial intrigue and adepts at swindling who for generations have only made profit and followed the principle "he who does not cheat does not sell"?

The Arg Fortress in Kabul is the seat of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

No, they have not turned their backs on their vocation or businesses, and have no reason to. Government-owned shops are virtually nonexistent in the country and shopkeepers will be needed and respected for a long time to come. Simply, my hosts had realized better and earlier than their colleagues that their fate was inseparable from that of the country (and we should not deceive ourselves: they are just a small island in the sea of Afghan retailers).

Do not the private, commercial interests of the shopkeepers and the interests of the republic coincide in many ways? Here is one problem. The government is seeking to control market prices. It would seem that it is trying to cut the profits of shopkeepers, who would like to get as much as possible for their goods. But the shopkeepers know from first-hand experience that high prices make for slow business. And prices remain high because the counterrevolutionaries still control many roads and levy "taxes" or simply rob goods convoys.

"The risks are high and losses bad. What can we do to make up for them?" the butcher Abdul Gaffar told me. "The

Shopkeepers Zikria Yahya (left) and Suleiman Arbab on combat duty in the centre of Herat.

other day my brother and I bought a hundred sheep in a village. As we herded them to Herat, thirty head were taken by members of Sher-aga's gang. So we had to ask higher prices for the rest. The buyers grumbled and our own hearts were heavy. We are losing customers of long standing and hearing bitter reproaches."

"Every honest shopkeeper who sells clean rather than smuggled goods ("Some deal in contraband you know," Yahya added) stands for the republic," greengrocer Suleiman Arbab chimed in. "Both our customers and ourselves know full well who the main enemy of the people is today. It is the counter-revolutionaries. It is not Islam or Moslem traditions they care for but easy profit, and therefore they would like trouble in Afghanistan to last for ever. They will have no mercy from the people."

"Yes," Yahya added. "Of course, we cannot dismiss them today. They have strong backers abroad who hate our revolution, they have money and weapons. But our people look forward to a new life, to peace and happiness, and they will overcome the grief and ruin that are being forced on them. We have truth on our side."

Achikzai Chief

"Speak up," my host told me. "I am hard of hearing: there has been quite a bit of fighting over the past few years, you know, and a lot of shelling."

Ismat Muslim is the chief of the 100,000-strong tribe of the Achikzais. He is 47, tall and straight, smoked spectacles in an "academic" frame out of keeping with the heavy Mauser gun in his belt and the submachine gun he had put down casually on the table between the teapot and a cup of hot tea.

Complex destinies are a surprise to no one in Afghanistan, and Muslim's life has taken several sharp turns. He comes from the army elite. His father, a colonel, commanded a division, served as governor of a province and held posts of responsibility in Kabul. Muslim followed in his footsteps and received a military education. He was an assistant commander of the Afghan engineering corps and taught at the higher military courses in the capital. But he never lost contact with his tribe, the Achikzais, who live in the border area near Kandahar. Men of his family have traditionally been chiefs of the tribe. When

NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

THE DELHI MEETING

The session of the Non-Aligned Nations' Coordinating Bureau at foreign minister level ended in Delhi on April 20. More than 100 delegations took part in it. The session was due to open on April 16 but it actually began a day earlier. Ministers who arrived in the Indian capital the day the news came of the U.S. bombing raid on Libya went straight from the airport to the Vigyan Bhavan palace for an emergency meeting which adopted a unanimous resolution condemning the aggression against that non-aligned state.

The Libyan events at once knocked the ground from under the feet of those members of the non-aligned movement who at times seek to propound the theory of "equidistance" of the non-aligned countries from the great powers. This time even those states which are inclined to orient on Washington did not venture to say a word in defence of the American action.

There was general approval at the session of the latest Soviet peace initiatives which, it was stressed, offer a striking contrast to the obstructionist policy pursued by the U.S. Nevertheless, newsmen learned, the delegates of some countries—Pakistan, for example —tried to delete from the Indian draft of the final resolution any concrete reference to the peace initiatives of the U.S.S.R. on the plea that the developing countries were threatened not so much by nuclear as by conventional weapons. The object of these manoeuvres, observers feel, was to avoid any mention, either positive or negative, of the so-called "superpowers." However, the absolute majority of the delegates did not favour that approach. As the chairman of the non-aligned movement, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who opened the session, said, the Soviet Union, as distinct from the United States, had reacted positively to the initiative of the six countries of four continents by unilaterally halting testing of nuclear weapons last year and twice prolonging its moratorium on nuclear explosions.

The Delhi meeting took place on the eve of the 8th non-aligned summit conference, which is to be held at the end of August in Harare (Zimbabwe).

The political declaration adopted at

his father had died, Ismat Muslim was chosen to lead the Achikzais.

Some of the Achikzais have long since lived on the other side of the border, in Pakistan. So when Hafisullah Amin began to suppress tribal chiefs and elders and ruthlessly crush age-old traditions and customs, Muslim took a group of close associates across the border to Pakistan. Shortly afterwards he formed a large armed force there.

A man of education and will, and a career army officer, Muslim attracted the attention of the counterrevolutionary leaders and their foreign backers. American, Pakistani and British advisers began to court him.

"The tribe and I personally were promised substantial financial and military aid," he remembered. "I was invited to go on long propaganda tours in Europe and on the other side of the Atlantic. But I flatly refused their offers. The interests of the Achikzais come before everything else for me...."

But then change came to Afghanistan. People began to rally around the party and the government of the republic. Many who had at first frowned on the revolution or even opposed it began to understand that its aims and actions were right.

Ismat Muslim could not be indifferent to change for the better in his homeland.

"Afghanistan is a land of many peoples and tribes," he continued. "Tribal relationships have always been strong in it. So when we heard that the democratic republic had proclaimed equality among all the nations and nationalities, pledged support for tribal independence and respect for tribal customs and called for close cooperation with the government, we were heartened. Physicians and teachers go out from Kabul to distant villages and convoys of food and clothing reach once forgotten people. Who has ever seen such a thing?"

Foreign advisers told a different story: do not succumb to the exhortations of the new regime, they said; stamp out the red menace.

"They want to install a reactionary regime in Afghanistan. They want to divide our country," Muslim was outraged. "You know, they have already shared out the republic amongst the counterrevolutionary parties and their leaders. The north has been promised to 'engineer' Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, leader of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, Kabul and Laghman Province to 'Professor' Sayaf, recent chairman of the Islamic Union of Mujaheddin of Afghanistan, and Kandahar with the land around it, including that of the Achikzais, has been 'presented' to Moulawi Khales, head of another Islamic party. What will the Afghan people have left?"

Two and a half years ago Ismat Muslim resolutely broke off contact with reactionary émigrés and their foreign masters and started talks with officials of the people's democratic government. Agreement was reached and Muslim's unit was given responsibility for the protection of all the Achikzai villages and a 130-km stretch of the Afghan-Pakistani border. The fighters in the unit are paid regular salaries and supplied with food by the government. The rest of the tribe carry on their traditional life, sowing wheat and grazing cattle.

Muslim's example was followed by the chiefs of several neighbouring Pashtun tribes. At the Loya Jirgah (Great Council) of Frontier Tribes in Kabul last September, they vowed support for the government of the republic and its army and border troops in blocking the infiltration by armed counterrevolutionaries. Nowadays, the tribes are raising a joint regiment to help Muslim's unit guard the border.

But it is not only war that is on Muslim's mind. I was told in Kabul that he is a "human engine." That "engine" brought Achikzai villages into action. Deep water wells began to be drilled. Two schools, a first-aid centre and a marketplace with dozens of shops have been built. Roads are being repaired and irrigation ditches restored.

"I would like to go about doing such things rather than fighting," Muslim said wistfully. "Regrettably, too little time is left for all that. The enemy will not

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he session reviewed developments ince the previous, 7th conference. Above all, it was reaffirmed that the essence of the non-aligned movement s struggle against imperialism whose policy presents a threat to the security nd independence of the non-aligned countries. The attempt by imperialist quarters to carry the struggle of the peoples for independence to the plane of confrontation between East and West was rejected.

Pointing out that the human survival depends on nuclear disarmament, the ministers declared for immediate measures to put an end to the nuclear arms race. They welcomed the far-reaching stage-by-stage programme advanced by the Soviet Union for ridding the planet of nuclear weapons. This programme, the declaration says, is consonant with the aspirations of the non-aligned states. The ministers urged the United States to accept the Soviet proposal and stop nuclear explosions.

The session condemned the plans for the militarization of outer space and urged refraining from testing and deployment of space weapons.

A large part of the declaration deals with the position of the non-aligned movement on the question of regional conflicts. In the first place, concern was, naturally, voiced over the situation in the Mediterranean. It was decided to send a delegation of the foreign ministers of India, Congo, Cuba, Ghana, Senegal and Yugoslavia to Libya to underscore the movement's solidarity with that country.

The delegates at the session condemned the racist policy of South Africa and Washington's "constructive engagement" with the South African rulers. They denounced the illegal occupation by the racists of Namibia and categorically rejected the attempts of Washington and Pretoria to link the granting of independence to Namibia with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. They called for holding without delay of an international conference on the Middle East to work out a just, comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problems and restore the inalienable right of the people of Palestine to self-determination.

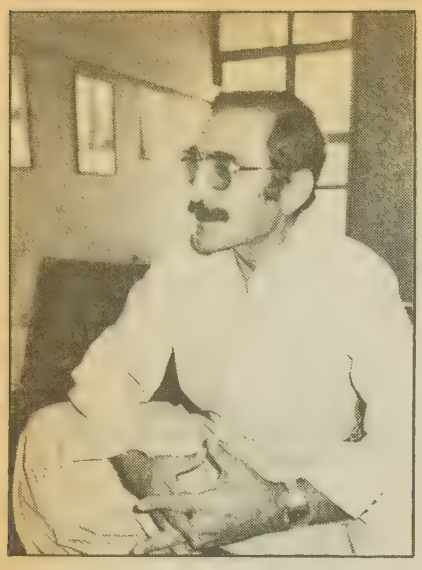
For the first time in the experience of the non-aligned movement, concern was voiced over the growth of international terrorism, including state terrorism. Special emphasis was laid on the impermissibility of labelling as international terrorism the national liberation movement, particularly in South Africa, Namibia and Palestine.

The Coordinating Bureau adopted also an economic declaration.

Appraising the work of the Delhi forum, observers noted the principled stand taken by the Zimbabwean delegation on all the issues discussed. This was seen as an indication that the next chairman of the non-aligned movement (the leader of the country where the next non-aligned summit is held) will continue actively to uphold the ideals of this influential movement.

L. ZHEGALOV
Our Own Correspondent

Delhi



Ismat Muslim, chief of the Achikzai tribe, is the commanding officer of a unit of volunteer border guards.

Photos by author

leave the republic in peace and our main preoccupation is with protecting the border."

Firuza's Unit

It was a short battle. The attempt of a handful of counterrevolutionaries to make their way to Kabul by circumventing major roads with armed patrols had failed. The bandits, who had unexpectedly encountered a strong outpost in the southwestern suburb of the capital, amidst mud huts, fields and vegetable gardens, were retreating into the mountains. More shots were fired and three bandits fell. Two of them were dead but Ali Khan, the leader of the band, racked with pain, kept swearing under his breath, cursing his fellows who had left him behind. Perhaps, he still had a chance of escaping?

"Throw your submachine gun aside!" he heard a female voice from behind him.

Ali Khan was amazed. A woman? Then more women came at a run from all sides, excited and breathing heavily, all of them armed.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" the first one asked sharply. He saw he had no chance and dropped his submachine gun at her feet.

As they took him to the nearest people's militia station, Ali Khan, forgetting his wound, bristled with threats: "If we had only known we were opposed by women we would have shown you, we would have made short work of you...."

"Are you sure?" Firuza asked. Her face was flushed, her black hair, prematurely streaked with grey, fell from under her kerchief. Her huge eyes looked at the bandit with contempt. If that thug only knew that she had already fought in dozens of such clashes and that he was far from the first prisoner taken by her unit.

Two days later the people's militia officer responsible for the unit came to see Firuza: "Congratulations, chief! This time the catch was really good. Ali Khan's group was taking booby-trapped packets of cigarettes, fountain pens and tins of food to the city. And we had been after the ringleader himself for a long time. Now we have nominated you for a government decoration."

On the eve of March 8, Firuza was presented with the medal For Dedicated Service, and now she wears it everywhere.

Gulkhana is a poor community like any other on the outskirts of the capital. Landless peasants coming to Kabul have been settling in it sporadically over the years, putting up one mud hut after another. There is a small orchard, a pasture or a field near each hut. It really looks like a village. One day 15-year-old Firuza came to the village from Vardak Province as the bride of a man as poor as herself. Her husband was 20 years older than she was and all he had to show for his toil was a poor mud hut, in which his family still lives, and a modest plot of land measuring three jeribs (a little more than 0.5 hectare). The family still depend on that field for their livelihood.

A good deal has changed in Gulkhana today. Better homes have been built and a hospital has been opened by the government. The shops are open, craftsmen are busy and a new school is under construction: the old one was burned down four years ago by the counterrevolutionaries, and children have to walk a long way for their classes.

Firuza saw the counterrevolutionaries perpetrating their atrocities around the city, outsiders, armed to the teeth, arrogantly walking the streets of the village, and proprietors, ruined by extortion and "taxes," closing their shops. And when the bandits burned down the school her sons attended, she told her neighbours: "We must take up arms! Is not the revolution our own cause? Is it not up to ourselves to defend our families, our homes and our land?"

The women's unit has now been in action in Gulkhana for more than three years. Twenty-five brave women guard the peaceful life of the population, doing day and night patrol duty, joining regular troops and people's militia for combat operations, raiding the secret houses of the counterrevolutionary underground, tracking down arms caches and intercepting counterrevolutionary liaison men. The reader may wonder what the men are doing. I put that question to Firuza.

"The men are busy," she explained. "Many of them are now in the army, fighting the counterrevolutionaries at the front. The others are breadwinners, working from dawn to dusk. And we in our unit are housewives, like myself, students and senior schoolgirls."

"And what if a large group of suspicious people appears in Gulkhana?" I asked her.

"The woman on duty gives me a ring and I call up all our women and girls," Firuza replied. "Oh, I quite forgot to tell you, the government installed telephones in almost all our homes. If need be I ring up other posts; there are also small groups of men, guards of the revolution, in the village. When things look really bad, we alert people's militia. But more often than not, we can cope. Ali Khan led about a dozen cutthroats, but we chased them away all the same...."

Firuza is in her early forties and has a large family to care for as well as her unit to command.

She was widowed early, 12 years ago, and was left to care for six boys aged from one to ten. And she brought all of them up. Five have finished school and the youngest is a sixth grader. The three elder ones are in the army, defending the revolution in the most troublesome areas: Zaman Khan is in Panjshir, Muhammad in Badakhshan Province on the Chinese border, and Karim is at the Salang Pass, through which vital freight convoys from the north reach Kabul.

Firuza's fellow fighters once noticed that their commander was distressed. They kept pestering her with questions but she would not say a word. Some time passed and she became her usual joyful self. Then she told her friends:

"Two months ago I had three letters at once from the front, and all three brought bad news: Zaman Khan's leg had been fractured by a shell fragment, Muhammad's tank had hit a mine laid by counterrevolutionaries, and Karim had been wounded in the shoulder by a burst of submachine-gun fire. I did not know how I could take it all. But now all three tell me in their letters that they are recovering and promise to come home on furlough."

"Why didn't you tell us?" her friends reproached her.

"I was afraid I would not be able to keep back tears. But I must not weep. I am your commander, after all."

* * *

A shopkeeper, a tribal chief, a farming woman. Early this year Zikria Yahya was elected to the Herat provincial committee of the National Fatherland Front and Muslim and Firuza to the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

They continue to fight with dedication for the ideals of the April Revolution.

Herat-Kandahar-Kabul

TAKING UP A POINT

The Soviet Union is planning to automate production on a large scale and raise labour productivity. Will this not confront you with a dilemma: you will either have to accept unemployment or to create new jobs. Since unemployment runs counter to the principles of socialism only the latter course is open to you. But this would detract from the national wealth, thus hindering the realization of your plans.

Michael MEYER
Saarbrücken, F.R.G.

Novosti Press Agency analyst VLADIMIR GUREVICH replies:

We have indeed got impressive modernization programmes involving a dramatic rise in labour productivity. The 27th CPSU Congress has set the task of raising labour productivity by 130-150 per cent by the year 2000. As for the social impact of these programmes, the point is not robotization and computerization as such, but the background against which they are implemented. Can it be said that in the West there was no unemployment before robots and computers appeared? The fact is that automation has merely served to exacerbate the problem already in existence.

The problem in this country is not unemployment but the shortage of manpower. The reasons for this lie, among other things, in certain deficiencies in the organization of production and the up to now slow rates of modernization. For instance, we need half as many workers again in industry as we have at present to ensure the two-shift operation of the existing equipment. We simply have not got enough workers, and this is one reason why introducing comprehensive automation and labour-saving technologies is so important to us.

True, jobs disappear when production is being modernized and the administrative apparatus rationalized. Under socialism, however, this does not mean that people remain unemployed. In the 1981-84 period modernization in industry led to the release of 3,000,000 workers, but none of them was made redundant.

The updating of a factory is usually attended by the appearance of new departments and workshops. Moreover, new production facilities appear which also provide jobs. Some of the released work force is reabsorbed in this way. Incidentally, shortage of manpower is one of the factors that make it preferable to modernize old plants, rather than start building new ones. Furthermore, workers are needed to develop our eastern regions, rich in resources of all kinds, and build up the infrastructure. We also intend to expand our housing construction programme considerably (within the next fifteen years, 50 per cent more housing will be built than in all the decades since the establishment of Soviet power). Moreover, more jobs become available as new cultural and service establishments are built and there will also be new jobs in the service industry, which at present does not fully meet demands.

These are all "quantitative" factors behind full employment. They are connected with the rates and scale of our socio-economic development. There are also "qualitative" factors, stemming from the planned character of the Soviet economy.

Unfortunately, we can't claim that all our projects are always fully implemented. But what factories are to be modernized and to what extent, where and what new production facilities are to be launched, and hence the workers that will be required, can be stated with a high degree of accuracy. As compared with the capitalist world, we are in the advantageous position of being able to carry out the redistribution and retraining of manpower on a planned basis, and to compile production programmes with the employment situation in a given town, region, constituent republic or the country as a whole in mind. Even closures do not create redundant labour. In the Donbas area, for instance, where the coal seams in some mines had been exhausted, the workers were transferred to other, newly sunk pits, the transfer having been planned in advance.

Surely under capitalism such an operation would hardly be feasible. Still less can it be possible to effect a regular redistribution of manpower on a planned basis. With the alternating slumps and recoveries, who would venture to predict that, say, in five years' time a given enterprise will exist at all?

Another important aspect is teaching new trades and retraining. In the West companies do their utmost to make the state reimburse them for the expenditure involved, while the state is anxious to avoid doing so. In 1986, for instance, allocations to the U.S. Department of Labour for the retraining of unemployed workers have been cut by 28 per cent.

In this country there is a state-run retraining system and high demands are placed on it today. It has been estimated that, to meet the requirements of our economy, up to 4 million workers will need to be retrained annually, almost as many will have to learn a second trade, and up to 20 million improve their skills. This is two to three times more than today.

Clearly, in the Soviet Union, too, the acceleration of technological progress and the automation of production pose new problems as regards employment and retraining. The pattern of employment is also changing. While in the previous five-year-plan period the increase in manpower resources was distributed practically equally between the productive and the nonproductive sectors, in the current five-year period almost the entire increase in the work force (3.2 million) can be channelled into education, the health service and other social and cultural departments that are undermanned. As you see, the very nature of the problems facing us and—most importantly—the opportunities our system offers for tackling them render nonexistent in our country what for the capitalist world economy is an inescapable evil: the fatal connection between modernization of production and a growing army of redundant people.

But, it may be asked, can the possibility be excluded that in the future supply will exceed demand in the internal labour market? At present, it looks like an extremely hypothetical situation. One solution, however, could be to reduce working hours while maintaining the level of pay. Increased leisure, Marx wrote, is an indication of greater national wealth and a precondition for the all-round development of the individual. Needless to say, what he meant has nothing in common with the kind of leisure that is the lot of 31 million unemployed and many more millions who have to work short hours in the West. He had in mind shorter hours as a result of high labour productivity within the context of a guaranteed right to work.

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PS POSTSCRIPT

Honouring a Debt?

In Britain today, CBS TV reports, everyone is wondering why Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher let the U.S. use the country as a base for striking at Libya. One possible reason, CBS believes, is her indebtedness to Washington for military aid during the Falklands war with Argentina. However, having paid Reagan in kind, the political cost to Mrs Thatcher could be considerable, CBS observes. On top of which, Washington may demand compound interest, which might well bankrupt the debtor.

Shameful, Tragic

One in three American adults is barely literate, notes the U.S. News and World Report. Consequently, about 60 million functionally illiterate Americans (44 per cent of blacks, 56 per cent of Hispanics, and 16 per cent of whites) cannot even read a newspaper and are thus unable to participate fully in the life of the country. Representative Pat Williams described the figures as a national tragedy and a disgrace to America.

Dope, Drink, etc.

The protection of U.S. missile bases in the F.R.G. is well below par, Stern notes. According to the official Pentagon statistics, in 1984 alone, 789 U.S. servicemen, rigorously vetted for reliability, were discharged for drug and liquor abuse, law-breaking and infringement of army regulations. But Stern interviews of U.S. deserters show that the real figure for dishonourable discharge is far higher.

Musical Chairs

For more than a week the Israeli government was on the "verge of crisis," AP reported, when Finance Minister Modai of the Likud bloc attacked the economic policies of Labour Premier Peres. When Peres asked for Modai's resignation, he declined to give it. However, things were patched up subsequently when Modai agreed to take over as Justice Minister. Nissim, whom he replaces, is now to be Minister of Finance. Some reshuffle!

Copping the Cops

When seeking to confiscate a consignment of marijuana, a police patrol in Sanchez Taboada, Mexico, was attacked by a large gang of armed smugglers. In the ensuing two-hour gun fight, 21 policemen and several gangsters were killed. Only two policemen got away unscathed. The West Berlin newspaper Tagesspiegel says that this was the biggest "roundup" of police ever by drug traffickers, who in Mexico alone buy up roughly 700 tons of pot annually, practically all of which eventually makes its way to the U.S.

Bribe or Fee?

In 1983, on the basis of information supplied by a Defence Department clerk, the London Observer reported that the department was wasting millions of pounds. The newspaper paid its informant £1,500 in fees, which a law court has ruled to have been a bribe, sentencing him to six months' imprisonment. Leaping at the opportunity, the Defence Department has accused the newspaper of bribery and it now remains for the law courts to decide whether or not it is guilty.

Export Item

El Salvador's pro-American regimes have plunged the country into indigence. According to Stern, half the work force is unemployed, and of every thousand infants, 78 die before they are a year old. No wonder baby-farming for export is common. The customers are mostly childless U.S. and Canadian couples. Local lawyers charge $1,500 to "legally" find an "orphan," and the cover documents for export are supplied on the black market. In response to this growing and lucrative demand, kidnapping is also on the increase.

Swiss Worries

Due to perilous winter avalanches in the Swiss Alps—the result of diminishing forests and environmental pollution—many inhabitants of Uri Canton will apparently have to move elsewhere. The government has been forced to assign two million Swiss francs to implement a range of forest-protection measures.

Schoolboy Suicides

Afraid that he would fail to get into high school, from which a matriculation certificate is necessary to enter university, a 15-year-old Japanese boy, Reuters report, hanged himself on the eve of the entrance exams, leaving a note in which he explained that he had not been sure he would be able to pass. Child suicide is not infrequent in Japan as it is impressed on young people by parents from an early age that they must get into university at all costs.

Drawings by V. Trinchenko

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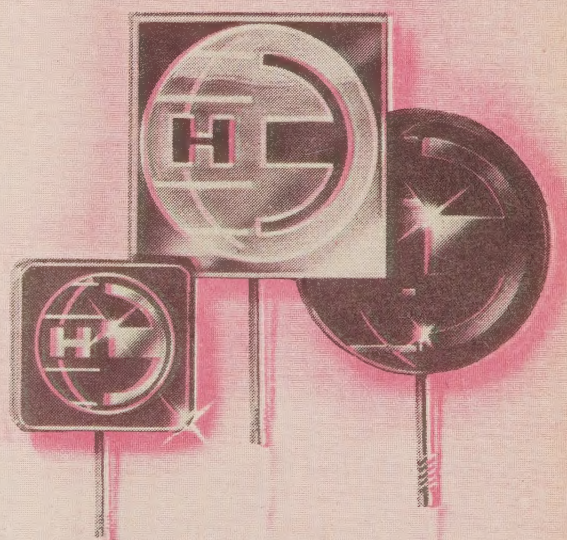

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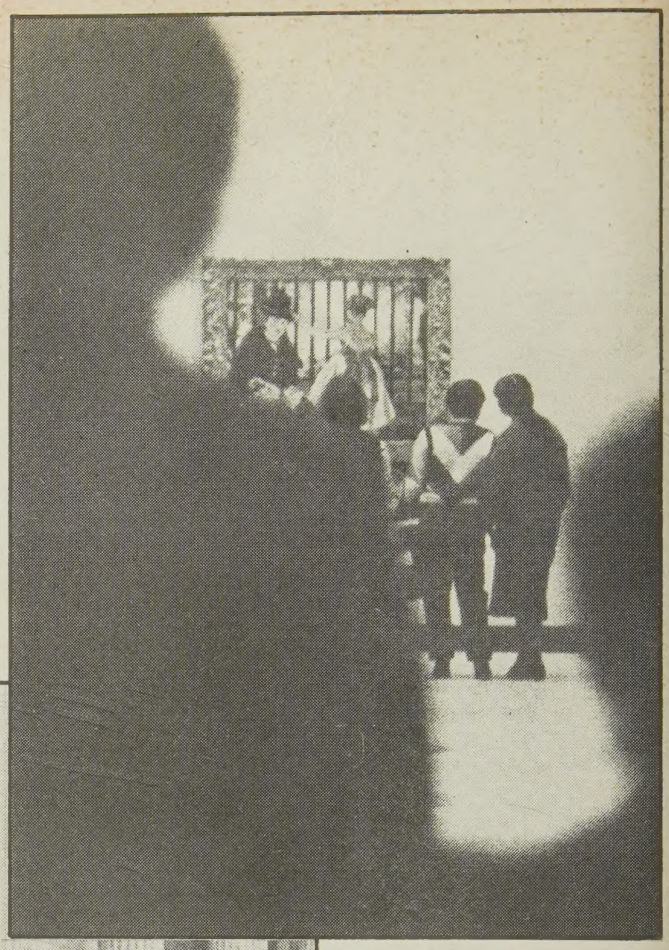
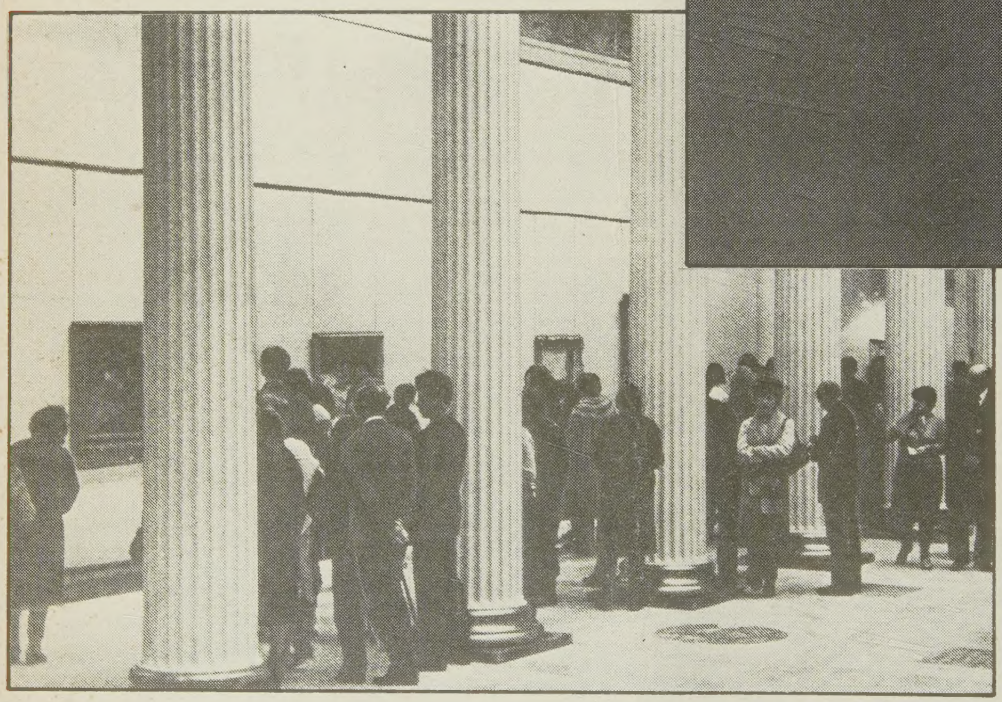


"I want to live, I want to know all the secrets, all the beauty of the world.... The grownups talk about the Bomb. But that's not the only problem. The problem is for us Americans and Russians to learn to live together, to learn all the secrets of the world together," said one of the little actors of David Wolcombe's children's theatre. In his play "Peace Child" which was performed at the World Youth and Student Festival in Moscow last year American and Soviet children acted together.

At the beginning of the present decade, however, such things were not encouraged. True, even in the period of the artificial freeze in Soviet-American cultural relations, Soviet publishing houses put out 1,784 books by American authors in a total circulation of 203 million copies. Soviet audiences continued to see American plays and films. And finally a change for the better appeared. In November last year in Geneva Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan announced that our two countries had signed an agreement on contacts and exchanges in the field of science, education and culture.

It is symbolic that the first American artistes to make a guest tour of the Soviet Union after a long interval were those who have dedicated their art to children—the children's theatre from Albany, New York (see our issue No. 6 for this year). Within the space of a few months the well-known American playwright William Gibson and the distinguished pianist Vladimir Horowitz have been here. The directors of American art galleries and museums have acquainted themselves with our country's art treasures and the experience of their Soviet colleagues. The Soviet pianist and winner of international contests Nikolai Petrov and the chief conductor of the Leningrad Kirov Opera and Ballet Theatre, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Yuri Temirkanov, have given performances in New York.



View of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts where French paintings from the Washington National Gallery collection are on display.

And now a new page in this cooperation has been opened. Forty masterpieces of French painting of the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries from the Washington National Gallery collection have been on view first in the State Hermitage Museum in Leningrad and now in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow. The canvases of Renoir, Manet, Degas, Gauguin, Monet and Picasso are not only a paean to beauty. They are an additional reminder of the wealth of the treasure trove of world art, and how much it has to give all nations if they have the resolve and the wisdom to coexist.

Before long Americans will be viewing a reply exhibition of masterpieces from the best Soviet art galleries.

G. SIDOROVA

Photos by Z. Zagorin